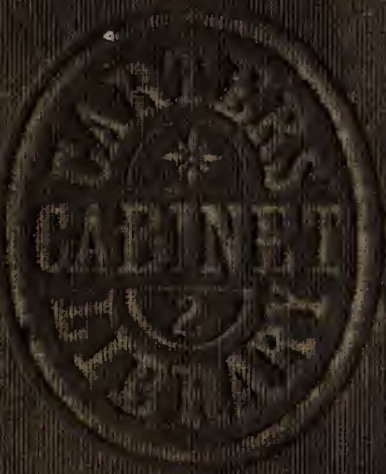

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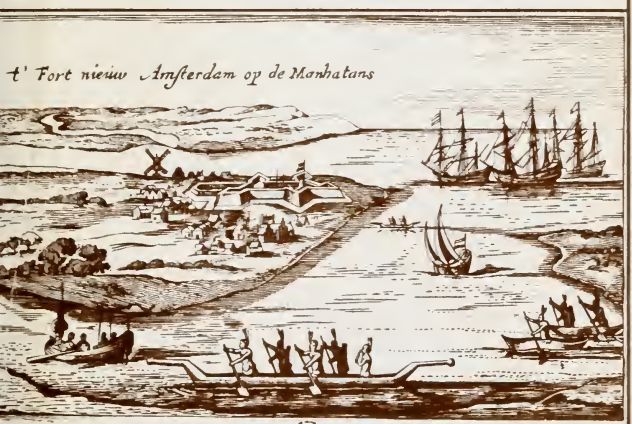

FORT NEW AMSTERDAM (NEW YORK), 1651.

When you leave, please leave this book
Because it has been said
"Ever'thing comes t' him who waits
Except a loaned book."

LIFE

IN

NEW YORK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE OLD WHITE MEETING-HOUSE"

SECOND EDITION.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE sketches that follow are drawn from life, and there are those who will feel them to be true. They are given to the world that the interior life of the great city may be known to those that read. The lesson will be useful if it rouses the dwellers here to take a livelier interest in devising and executing wise and efficient schemes for the improvement of the vicious and the relief of the suffering.

A vast amount of *sympathy* is expended upon the profligate and the poor, which results in no well-considered efforts to do good. This assertion will not be regarded as too strong by those who will explore the haunts of vice and the abodes of poverty

that abound within the precincts of this metropolis.

But still another object may be reached by the publication of these sketches: the young in the country may learn the dangers that lurk in the city, and keep away from their reach. Life in the city has a charm that fascinates the distant, and many who have peaceful and happy homes in the secluded vales of the country, are often tempted to seek fortune or pleasure here. They make a sad exchange. Peace is there, and plenty and purity: here is labour, temptation, and often bitter disappointments and trials, such as are not to be felt in the quiet walks they have forsaken.

But wherever sin is, there is misery. There is no doubt of this, and as these pages are read, this truth will be illustrated and impressed. That such may be the effect, and that the cause of virtue may be promoted, is the single desire of the writer.

November, 1846.

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LIFE IN THE CITY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

It does us good to know what sort of a world we live in. And it has been well and often said, that one half of the world know not how the other half live. Every man for himself, is one of the most popular maxims of the age ; at least, more men act upon it than upon that other and better precept—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And there is no part of the world where this supreme selfishness is more universal, where it is even a virtue in the eyes of more, than in a great city. You live, and move, and sicken, and die, while your next-door neighbour, perhaps, knows noth-

ing of you, till he sees the hearse and carriages at your funeral.

I heard a story the other day, of a Frenchman standing on the dock and seeing a man struggling in the water for his life. The man sank and was drowned, and the Frenchman, in great distress, bewailed his sad fate, and expressed his regret that he had never been introduced to the poor fellow, as he might have saved him if he had only had the honour of his acquaintance. Such Frenchmen as this are very numerous in these parts. And many of them never saw France. Because we have no *personal* relationship, no ties of blood or business to bind us to those about us, and not even the brotherhood of common acquaintance, we let the world look out for itself, while we flatter ourselves that it is of no importance to us what becomes of the rest, if we are but well used. This is the *humanity* of the city. Well might the poet of Israel ask, "Lord, what is man that *thou* art mindful of him?" He is not mindful of his fellow!

He cares not for the misery that weeps at his door, for the poverty that hides in the cellar hard by the princely mansion in which he dwells, nor the vice that riots around the corner, and makes a hell in his very neighbourhood. Provided always, that this misery, and poverty, and vice, will keep still, and make no disturbance; but, look out there, if wretchedness groans too loudly, or beggary becomes too clamorous, or vice too noisy, then our modern philanthropist bestirs himself, and is wonderfully considerate of the state of things, and of the times, and talks of the need of reform, of systematic benevolence, and a vigilant police, and all that, till he is delivered of the nuisance which he just now endured. It is one of the boasts of our day, that we have an original plan for doing everything in the right way; and as all these matters are attended to by associations, there is nothing left for individuals. Of course, they are not under the necessity of troubling themselves about the wants or woes of other people. The

"Society" will look after that. This is a good, and then there are evils growing out of it. Individual responsibility is merged in the mass, and lost sight of; but the work is better done, beyond a doubt, than if it were left to the impulses of those who feel. I have no heart to join in the cry now frequently raised by our modern reformers against the *institutions* of society, as if these made paupers and criminals, and then left them to look after themselves. Society is organized well enough. The plan is good, and needs no infusion of Fourierism to make it better. The *plan* is good, and the body politic will be improved as the Bible is more and more read and believed. But there is a shocking want of *humanity*, of feeling for one's own kind, in this community. There's no doubt of it.

Look at the throngs of the young—"young men and maidens"—flocking in the broadest and slipperiest road that leads to the bottomless pit. You can not step into Broadway after nightfall without seeing

them. They are tripping it down to the rayless dungeon of eternal wo, as lightly and madly as if it were not the dance of death! Thousands of them, ten thousands of them, are within the sound of the fire-bell, and every time it tolls, it sounds the knell of some of their immortal, priceless souls. But who cares! Who of the uncounted Christians of this proud city has the burden of these wretched candidates for judgment on his conscience? How many of them might say, when the brief career of sin is ended, and grim death dashes their cup of folly to the ground, "*No man cared for my soul.*"

We look at them in the mass. It is not so easy to *feel* for a crowd as for a single subject of pity. If we should stop one of these children of guilt and shame, and hear her story, we should feel for her. She has or had a mother; she has a sister; the hearthstone was bright once with the light of her eye. I have somewhere in my papers a story that, when it was a terrible

reality before me, made the tears come often, and if you will read it, you shall know more of "life in the city" than now.

If you should go down, after dark, into that basement, close by the —— theatre, and knock softly at the door, it would be opened quietly, and you should walk by the light of a single lamp, through a long and narrow passage, a slide door would admit you to a room where twenty men are sitting sullenly silent, as if dead. One starts from the table mad with disappointment, and stung with shame, and rushes out of the room. The game goes on. These are gamblers. This whole row is filled with such *saloons* as this, and nightly they are haunted by men who play for passion or for gain. "Hells," they are called. A fitter name the language has not. I have a story of *one* who perished here; would you like to read it?

What a city is this! Somebody has written of LONDON as a great maelstrom in which the young are caught and whirled;

pleased with the giddy rush around the outer circle of this mighty whirlpool, they smile at danger, till at last they are intoxicated with the motion, sucked into the awful vortex, dashed upon the fatal rocks, and thrown out upon the surface, bruised and mangled corpses. I would rather speak of NEW YORK, under a figure drawn from the borders of our own state. The youth who enters it glides smoothly along, as on a gently descending stream, whose banks are clothed with verdure and gemmed with flowers; onward and downward floats his bark; he is in the rapids now, but he loves his danger, hears with mad joy the roar of the mighty cataract below; laughs at the mists that rise like pillars of cloud to warn him that destruction is near; he plies the oar with fiercer strength, as if the lightning speed of the dashing current were too slow for him; on, on, down, down; the brink is gained; one wild *hurrah* rises above the torrent's voice, and the young voyager makes the final, fatal, returnless plunge.

Keep away from the water, ye youth, who would not perish in the waves. It is no place for you who have a safe and happy home on shore.

But instead of moralizing any farther, listen to a story of life in the city. If parts of it read like *fiction*, remember that truth is stranger than fiction, and more full of wisdom.

CHAPTER II.

ALICE LINDON.

The village in which she was born and where she lived till "sweet sixteen," is on the Connecticut river, but how near its union with the Sound I may not say. Nor does the little cluster of white cottages, one of which was the home of her childhood, scarcely aspire to the name of *village*. There is the meetinghouse, with a spire pointing to the skies, of which the house of God is the gate; but the most of the worshippers came from the country-side, miles around; there is a small "inn," where the traveller may stop for rest and refreshment, and there are a few shops to supply the wants of the neighbours; and then a few neat houses, showing comfort without wealth,

peace which is plenty; and here was the birthplace of Alice Lindon.

Her own home stood in a sweet cove back from the river, a bosom of water and shore that seemed the very chosen spot for domestic love to hide itself and dwell. A green lawn, with a rude enclosure, stretched in front of the cottage to the shore; great trees stood around the house, affording fruit and shade, and the soft banks of the stream invited the child of Nature to wander on them and enjoy the beauty which the full hand of Nature had spread over the rich and romantic scene. In very childhood, Alice had discovered a fondness for the charms with which she was surrounded. Long before her mind was expanded by reading, or by intercourse with the world, she had learned to love God's world; the landscape radiant with his smiles; the water sparkling in his light by day, and reflecting his stars by night; the hill and dale that were covered with his bounty and spoke ever of his love: these were the scenes

with which Alice was familiar and happy in the sunny hours of her childhood.

The death of her father, when she was but ten years old, left her solely to the care of her widowed mother, and having no brothers or sisters with whom to share her sorrows or the joys of her young heart, she was always with her mother, except when abroad in the fields, or on the banks of the gentle river that ever lay at her feet. Mrs. Lindon had enjoyed the advantages of education and society, when she was young, and though her removal to this rural retreat and her straitened circumstances had deprived her of pleasures for which she had tastes and capacities, she had never despaired of training her only child for higher enjoyments and wider usefulness than could be hers in the secluded hamlet where she was born. It had therefore been the aim of Mrs. Lindon, for many years of industry and economy, to lay aside the means to enable her to give Alice an education, such as should fit her to do good in another sphere.

It was plain to a watchful mother, that there was much in Alice that would attract the attention and secure the admiration of the world, should she enter upon its scenes; and as the grace of God had never renewed the heart of the sweet girl, it is not strange that Mrs. Lindon should tremble at the thought of sending her away from home at her tender age. For Alice was now sixteen, and had no other means of instruction than her mother and the village-school could give her, and it was important, without any further delay, that she should go abroad to enjoy those advantages which the higher seminaries alone could afford.

That was an anxious hour, both to mother and daughter, when Alice Lindon took leave of the parental roof for the city of ———, where she was to board with a relative of her mother, and attend an excellent school, in which she would have every opportunity of obtaining a finished education, under teachers of wide and well-earned popularity. The first appearance of Alice in the school-

room was an era in it. The loveliness of her form and features, the meek simplicity of her manners, fashioned by no rule but the good sense of her mother and her own native gentleness, and with these traits the freedom which life in the country had inspired, rendered her at once an object of attention, and it was not many days before she was known as the flower of the school.

The strong anxieties of the mother were in a great measure relieved when she heard that Alice was a favorite with her teachers, and an object of solicitude and kindness with all who became acquainted with her. Yet these were the very evidences that she was in danger. Alice's heart was open as the day; her spirit leaped at the voice of friendship, and she had never known in the sanctuary of her childhood and the purity of her early home, that there was deceit in this fair world; and now that she was on the gayer walks of life, it seemed that she had found more to love and trust, and she learned to be happier than on the banks of

the river and under the trees of her native village. And true it is that danger often lies where we least suspect its presence. Mrs. Lindon's friend, who had offered Alice a home with her while she should be at school, had done a similar favour to another friend who had wished to place a son at college, and in the fondness of her heart she had thought that Edward Murray would prove a pleasant companion and friend to Alice Lindon, during the time that they made her house their home.

It is not my inclination, nor does it comport with my notions of propriety, to follow in detail the facts that marked the year which Alice Lindon spent in ——. Her new acquaintance, Edward Murray, was a spoiled child from New York, a model of virtue in the eyes of his doating parents, and a "bad boy," as everybody else knew full well. He had trifled away his early years in boarding-schools, till he was now eighteen, and had been *at home* enough in the city to learn the world, to love many of

its vices, which in secret he indulged, while to his parents he seemed all that their hearts desired. His free and easy manners rendered his society agreeable, and practice had made him early perfect in those soft accomplishments that secure a young man a cordial welcome in the social circle.

It was a new world to Alice, when the winning voice of Edward Murray whispered in her ear that he loved her; she had heard his praises from her young companions, and thought he was a worthy young man, who took pleasure in reading to her and her aunt, who was happy when he could aid her in her lessons, or escort her to and from church of an evening. All this was very well, and she thought no more of it, than of other kindnesses which everybody seemed glad to show her. But her young heart fluttered anxiously when Edward breathed into her ear the gentle confession that she was dear to him, and that he would live to make her happy. She believed him, and why should

she not? No one had ever deceived her, and why should she doubt?

But he did deceive her, to her ruin. Under the flattering pretext of an invitation to his father's house, she followed him to the city of New York, and there he left her in wretchedness and shame; without a shelter or a friend.

This is crowding into a few lines what would naturally fill many of these pages, and make a tale of sin and misery to harrow the heart.

Alice woke to a sense of her utter abandonment. A stranger in a great city, and without the means of flying from it, what should she do? She thought of home! O that she were there in the innocence of her childhood, happy in the smiles of those she loved, thoughtless of care, and with a heart flowing over ever with the purest joy! She thought of her mother! How she would love to fall on her breast and confess her sins and be forgiven! Before this, and that mother must have heard that she had been

deceived and lost; and could a mother *live*, with the terrible consciousness that her daughter, her idol, her all, had fallen into the snare of the destroyer? Wrung with anguish, and distracted with such thoughts as these that crowded upon her brain, Alice was ready to hasten to her mother, and bury herself in the unfathomed depths of a mother's love. But how could she go, and ought she to expect forgiveness if she did?

In the midst of this conflict of soul, she is found by a minister of vice, one whose business it is to find victims for the daily sacrifice on the altars of sin in the gay and guilty city of New York. A shelter was offered, and that was more than Alice had. Again the wiles of the wicked were thrown around her, and the prey was easy. Down the dark road of guilt and shame she travelled swiftly—a sight to make the angels weep!

Oh! if there was sorrow in heaven when the pure spirits that shone with celestial brightness around the spotless throne were

seduced to sin and hell; if the angels that stood steadfast in their integrity wept, when those they loved broke away from their holy worship and wrapped their seraphic charms in the robes of the damned, may we not weep when such as Alice Lindon fall! God have mercy on her; though, alas, how true that such as she, like angels, fall to rise again no more! Her steps take hold on hell!

* * * * * * * *

Three years pass away. "In my rounds of duty," says a city minister, who furnishes the facts, "I was walking in one of the miserable streets of the city, when a woman came up to me, and asked if I would call and see a girl that was sick and likely to die. I told her to lead the way, and I would follow her at once.

"She turned into a narrow alley between two houses of doubtful reputation, and by the back way led me in and up two flights of stairs to a little attic chamber. It was not a comfortless room: the floor had a

strip of carpet reaching from the door to the bed; a chair or two stood there, and the faded curtains and broken mirror were signs of what would be called the 'shabby genteel.' The woman who acted as my guide had told me, on my way up stairs, that 'the sick girl had been suddenly taken with a fever, and they thought of having her sent to the poorhouse; but she begged so hard to stay, and seemed like to die so soon, that they thought they would wait a little and see. Sometimes she seems to be raving, and goes on like mad about her mother, and all that; but, poor things, they all cry when they come to be sick, and want to go home and die.'

"Stretched on the bed, with a flushed cheek, and a wildly-flashing, brilliant eye, lay a young woman who, it was plain to see, had been a beauty in her day.

"She turned her face toward the wall as I entered, and shut her eyes; but the tears would find their way through the closed

lids, and I saw the pilows had been wet with her weeping before I came.

"'Here's the minister,' said my guide; 'you wanted to see him, and I just asked him to call, as I saw him going along the street.'

"'O, the minister, is it; I am so glad he is come. O can't you do something for me, for my poor soul? I shall die and go to hell, and I ought to go to hell! What shall I do?'

"She paused, and turned her full eyes upon me, with an imploring look that went to my heart. An image of despair! A LOST one! I thought of the 'archangel ruined,' in Milton! and the hopelessness of the case before me seemed to defy the words of consolation which it is so sweet to offer to the dying. But I would try. I thought of the thief on the cross; of the Magdalene in the gospel, from whom seven devils were cast by the power of the same Saviour whom I could preach to this *possessed;* and I began—

"'You have heard of the way to find forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ,' I asked, by way of introducing the subject.

"'O, yes. When I was a little girl at home, my mother used—' and she could go no further, but burst into a flood of impassioned tears.

"'Then you have a mother—what is your name?'

"She soon became more composed, and on my again asking of her early history, she gave me the facts which are mentioned in the previous part of this sketch.

"This was Alice Lindon; and here was the idol of a fond mother, the flower of the school, and now a worn and wretched thing, cast out of the world's sympathies, and dying in misery, to meet misery ineffable in a world of wo. Poor girl! My heart ached for her, and I asked again if her mother knew where she was.

"'No, sir. I came to this city from ——, three years ago, and if my mother has tried to find me, as I know she has, it

has done no good. I have often thought of writing to her; but I was so wicked that I could not bear to tell her where I was, it would be so much worse than to think me dead. *Dead!* DEAD! yes, I shall soon be dead, and then where will my poor soul be?'

"With the simplicity and solemn earnestness that the time and the circumstances seemed to demand, I then preached repentance to this perishing sinner. She drank in the words, as the words of eternal life. The truth seemed familiar, as if the memory of things past were coming back, and a ray of hope was rising on the gloom of her dark spirit. When I had spoken of sin and its just demerit—of the wrath of God and the curse of the law, which condemns the sinner to everlasting death, I added, 'But you know it is a faithful saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save even the chief of sinners.'

"'What is that,' she said; 'please to repeat those words again. I have heard them before.'

"I told her they were the words of the Bible which she had often read and heard, and they were the words on which now depends the salvation of her precious soul. Vile as she had been, the fulness of Christ's love would meet her case, if she would trust in it.

"Having exhausted all my strength of persuasion, and having conversed with her until it was evident that her own strength would not allow me to prolong the interview, I prayed with her and left her. The servant woman who had brought me up, showed me the way out, and I besought her to make the last days of the poor thing as comfortable as she could.

"'She wont last long,' said she; 'she'll get a raving in the night, and, like as any way, drop right off in a minute.'

"True enough. I was haunted all night with thoughts of the blighted soul of that once lovely and lost child, and the very next day made a visit to the house.

"The woman met me in the alley, and

said: 'It is all up with her. She died in the night, screaming for her mother.'

"They sent for a coroner, I believe, and the almshouse department sent her frail body to the Potter's field."

A sad tale. But it has itself repeated in hundreds of cases every year. There is misery in this world that we know nothing of. There are hearts now breaking, which never find sympathy in ours, for we know not of their sorrows. But in the midst of us are children of wretchedness, who weep in secret, and die in secret, and on their wounds the oil of mercy never comes.

Sin is its source. The way of transgressors is hard. It may seem fair and right, but its end is death, its end is hell.

The path of virtue is peace. It leads to love and heaven; it is a bright way; its flowers fade not; its waters are sweet, and pure, and perennial. Angels are in it, the guardian spirits of the young who walk in it; and God our Saviour holds the pilgrim in his hand, and guides him up to glory.

CHAPTER III.

HENRY NEWTON AND HIS SISTER.

It is nearly a year since—it was late in the autumn of last year—that I was walking down M—— street late in the evening. The night was bitterly cold; a winter storm just struggling on; the very night when a man likes to be snug in his own bed at home. Yet it does make him easy in the cold to think that a glowing grate will smile on him shortly, and a warm room make him forget the blasts of a damp, cold night. It must be very hard to be poor in the city, to have no well-filled coal-hole, nor any grate to huddle over when the stinging frost finds its way to your bones. It must be very hard.

I was hastening homeward, and had taken this obscure street as a short-cut—my cloak drawn closely around my face to shield it

from the driving wind and the sleet that every now and then rattled against the houses, when a feeble tremulous voice fell on my ear. Opening my cloak, and pushing up my hat to hear what was said, I perceived a young lady closely wrapped in shawl and hood, who spoke to me again:—

"Sir, can you tell me which is No. 26 of this street?"

"I think I can find it for you," said I, "but are you sure that you are in the street you are looking for? This is a rough place for you to be in alone at this time of night."

"I know it," she replied, "but I have business here that would take me into a worse place than this, could I only find the object of my search."

Of course I was too much interested in the deep earnestness of her tone, the evident sincerity of her purpose, and doubtless too curious as to the errand that brought her there, to hesitate a moment about offering to aid her in finding the number for which she required. Walking up a flight of steps

by the nearest lamp, I discovered that we were half a mile from the place she was seeking, as she had come to the wrong end of the street; but it was right on my way, and I therefore was unable to persuade myself into a bit of romantic benevolence in offering to show her the house. We walked on together. And I remarked, for the sake of saying something:—

"Certainly you can not be very familiar with the city, or you would be afraid to be out after dark in this vicinity."

"O," said she, "I see that you will not believe that I have anything good in view, unless I tell you the dreadful business that calls me here. You spoke so kindly to me, that I felt it safe to trust myself to your direction, and now I could tell you my trouble."

"I would not for the world have you do violence to your sense of propriety in mentioning to a stranger what he has no right to know; but if I could be of any service to you, if your errand is of such a nature that

my attention would be any relief to your feelings, it will give me real pleasure to assist you."

A sudden thought struck her. "You can: I was wondering how I should get in, when I found the house, but if you are at home in the city, you can perhaps help me."

"Cheerfully," said I; "proceed with your story, as we shall soon be there."

"I am going for my brother," she remarked. "He was to have been home at ten o'clock, but he did not come, and I waited till eleven, and as he did not return, I am going to find him. He has got into the way of playing billiards lately, and several times he has been out almost all night, and when he has come in, he is in a dreadful state. He has promised me often that he never would do so again, and has told me where it is that he has been in the habit of going, and I am afraid he is there now. He seems to have such a passion for play, that he will go, though I think he tries hard sometimes to get over it."

We walked on in silence, while I thought of the whole story of wretchedness and ruin in that short narrative. She had given me the outline of it only. I could fill it up without her aid, it was so like so many that I had heard before. It will help the reader to *feel* the sequel, if I here mention what was afterward related to me by this new companion of my night walk.

It was the same story that you have read. Perhaps you know it already, or another like it. Henry Newton was the son of a country merchant, and one or two visits with his father to the city to buy goods, had given him a taste for the freer life that was to be led in its gayer streets, and he grew sick of the counter and the country altogether. He was nearly a man in his years, and thought he should prefer to go into business in the great city, where fortunes were soon made, and then he would come back into the country, and settle. An easy father yielded to his son's importunities, and made arrangements with an old and well-

known firm in New York, with which he had long done business, to take Henry into their store; for though he had no relish for the confinement of business there was no other way of gratifying his desire for the city. But were there no other ties than those of home to keep this youth away from the great metropolis?

Henry had one more call to make before he could leave the village. Mary Wilton had been his *friend* from childhood. He had grown up by her side; had played with her every day of his life almost, at school and at home, Saturday afternoons always; had carried her basket, helped her over the fences, made all her quarrels his, and as they grew nearer and nearer to the period of youth, she had seemed less like his sister and more like one dearer than a sister. Henry thought he loved her, and that he could never live without her, and never, till he had a taste of the city, did he dream of any pleasure that had not Mary Wilton for its light and joy. He was now on his way to

bid her farewell, and had never thought till that moment how hard it would be to part with the friend of his childhood and youth; his heart was sad, and he was wishing that he had said nothing about the city, but had lived always in the same street with Mary Wilton. He found her in tears, and not very sorry was he thus to find her. It was a fond assurance that she loved him; he was happy in the thought that she would be his when he should return from the city, and claim her for his own.

"Then why must you go?" she asked, as he told her he was sorry that the hour of parting had come at last. "Why leave us and our sweet home for strange faces and strange places? Why will you go?"

"We shall never be anything if we stay here," he replied. "There is nothing to be made in the way of business; but a few years in New York, if I am successful, will put us in the way of wealth, and then I can give my Mary such a home as she deserves."

"I want no better home than this, or even

one more humble would answer could I but share it with you," said Mary, and she wept at the boldness of her speech, which was in fact a fuller declaration of her own heart than she had ever ventured to make before.

"But I shall often be home to see you, Mary; every summer I shall spend the month of August here, and the holydays in winter will bring me back to your side. Come now, dry up your tears and let us be cheerful when we part. 'Tis but for a little and then we meet again."

"I do not like to say it, Henry, but I do feel afraid about your going to the city; you are so fond of company, and so full of life and spirit, that I can not help but fear that you will forget us up in the country, when new friends and new scenes are before you."

Henry was startled at the thought. It was new to him. He had never dreamed that the pleasures of which he had a little taste a few months ago were to make him forgetful of the friends he had loved in his childhood, and whom he thought he should

love as long as he had life. He was loud in his assurances that distance and separation would only make them more dear, and sure he was, that never would he find one more precious than his own Mary. He was only sorry that she was not going with him, to be ever near him, that he could see her every evening as he had done as long as he could remember.

"And you will write to me often," she said, "and tell me how you enjoy the city, and what new friends you make, and how you get on in business, and everything that I would like to know: you will?"

"Yes, certainly, and you will never let a week go by, without writing to your own Henry, who will think it the brightest day of the week when he hears from Mary Walton."

They parted. She stayed to pray for him she loved, and Henry was soon in New York, a clerk in one of the most fashionable drygoods stores of the city. * * *

"I say, Newton, what do you say to go-

ing to the theatre to-night?" said one of the clerks to Henry, but a few days after he was installed in his new situation. Henry had never been to the theatre in his life, but he had wanted to go a thousand times, and he meant to go *once*, just to see for himself, and know about it.

"I'm ready," he answered; "I was thinking of that same thing myself, and should like it well."

A new world, and a dazzling one, burst on the sight of that young man as the slight door flew open at the touch of his companion, and the glare of the brilliant theatre shone upon his bewildered eyes. There, young men, you are in the outer circle of the vortex, but booked and ticketed for the fatal returnless plunge. You will play around awhile upon the surface, and think it fine fun to sport on the smooth wave, but the devil is pushing your shell of a boat, and grins behind you, as he sees the circle narrowing, the rush increasing, your damnation more sure. O! if I could shout so

loud as to be heard above the roar of the waters around you, I would cry, " Beware, beware, for the path to hell lies there, and the way is easy."

But what young man will stop to hear preaching when he is crossing the threshold of a theatre? Henry heard nothing, saw nothing at first, but like one intoxicated with the splendour of the scenery, the unreal novelty of what was passing before him, he gazed in silent amazement. His young friend pointed him to well-known actors, and initiated him slowly into the mysteries of the new life on which he had entered. A stroll through the galleries completed his apprenticeship. Henry was an apt scholar. Ardent, impetuous in his passions, fond of *pleasure* and now seeking it, he needed little instruction to guide him in the race of ruin which he had entered. Before he slept that night he had drank till he had little consciousness of what he was doing, and when he woke the next morning, a dim and distressing recollection of what he had passed

through stole over him. It was bright while it lasted, but it is bitter to remember, now it is gone. But the next night was as the last and more abundant in evil. He had taken but a single step the night before, and new scenes of dissipation, mirth, and damning sin, were unveiled to his craving appetite. Like the tiger that has a taste for blood, he longed for more. There is no need that we follow him. The noose of the devil is around his neck, and a "willing captive," he follows his master. Poor boy! The sweet air of your native hills would have been purer and healthier for your soul, than the close, foul atmosphere of that den where you revelled on the second night of your career of shame. What would Mary Wilton have said, how would Mary Wilton have felt, had she known the dangers of that dreadful night? Did you think of her, Henry, when the laugh and the song rang merrily in those walls where you sold your soul for the miserable pay of an hour of sin? Yes, Henry, you know you did. And

once you thought you would dash away the maddening cup, and break from the charmed circle, and rush into the street and fly to her who loved you and would make you blest! It was a sudden thought, and it perished on the instant. Had you cherished it one moment, perhaps it would have saved you. But it was drowned in the wine-cup, and your doom was sealed.

Henry Newton was not sufficiently inured to these scenes of dissipation to be able to conceal from his employers, his father's friends, the evidences of his delinquency. They could read it in his looks, and they were faithful to remonstrate with him on what they knew to be his habits; but when was a young man willing to believe that he was *in danger?* He could take care of himself; he knew what he was about; he was a little out of health and *that* made him look so; he would give them no reason to fear for him, and besides, he was not twenty yet, and might sow wild oats for some time to come. All this was very far

from being satisfactory to them, and they determined to consult with the father.

Mr. Newton heard the report of his son's wildness with deep distress. It had not entered into his calculations when sending Henry, a young man of nineteen, into the city, that he was to be led into bad company and dissolute habits. But he was a man of business, of close calculations, and as he had sent Henry to the city solely because he could make money there, so he reasoned now, that if Henry had not the *means* to gratify his desires for pleasure, he must deny himself, and of necessity be a steady young man. His salary was barely enough to clothe him and pay for his board. Mr. Newton would furnish him no more spending-money, and how could Henry then be a spendthrift?

A severe, and certainly a deservedly severe, letter from his father announced to Henry, that his father had heard with deep concern and grief the evil courses on which he had entered, and he earnestly desired

him to forsake his evil companions; and if he would please his father, and make an anxious family happy, he would leave the city and hasten home. Not he. He smiled at the suggestion, and was distressed with one passage only in the letter — that which informed him of his father's determination to stop the supplies.

For a time, however, it did throw a check upon his career. Indeed, there was no help for it. Who would pay the bills? He had always been the best supplied with money of any in the club to which he belonged, and it was more than he could stand to think of making an exposure of his impoverished treasury. He chafed under his confinement, as he felt himself suddenly shut out from sources of enjoyment which had now become essential to his being, and he began to devise ways and means to regain what he had lost. An appeal to his father *for funds* was worse than fruitless. It brought him another and severer letter on the error of his ways.

A hundred times in the day he went to the drawer in the store where the loose change was thrown, and a hundred times a day the thought was revolved, that if that money was in his pocket, he could have all he wanted. There comes the devil again: he is drawing that noose a little tighter, and a little tighter — he will strangle you yet, young man. Touch that silver, and you are lost. It is not yours. It shines but to tempt; resist the devil and he will flee, but yield one inch and the game is up.

But he did touch it. He took it, a little at a time, and it was not missed — a little more, and then he wanted more, and the desire grew with the indulgence, and indulgence was increased, till the inroad upon the silver could no longer be concealed. What would Mary Wilton say of you, Henry Newton, if she knew you were a thief! Think of it, and hide your head with shame; blush at the very recollection of her purity, her prayers, her tears, and your own base apostacy, profligacy, and sin!

Henry's employers were not long in doubt when they found there was a thief in the store. But they would make an example of him, and bring the thing home to his own conscience in a form of peculiar terror; so they determined to expel him from their service, and send him home in disgrace. Respect for a father's feelings prevented them from delivering him up to the arm of the law, while they doubted if justice did not demand his punishment. Yet what a change was this for Henry Newton, when he returned to his father's house! How could he meet the eye of a father whose confidence he had abused! Would Mary Wilton welcome him back to the spot which he had deserted? Should he ever regain the character he had lost? These were the thoughts which pressed heavily upon him when he made his way back to his native village. He resolved to confess his errors, to humble himself, and make an effort to secure the sympathy and forgiveness of those whom he had grieved. His father

was but too willing to accept his professions of penitence, and no one else had heard of his fall. His own sister knew nothing of it, and Mary Wilton, all unconscious of his guilt, gave him a glad welcome.

"Now, you will never go back to that dreadful city, will you? You will stay with us, and be as happy as when we were children, and never knew what it was to be separated."

Henry was ready to promise. He was for the moment heart-sick, and inwardly he lamented the day when he was first tempted to leave those lovely shades and early friends for the gay, empty pleasures in which he had been revelling.

So he felt for a few weeks, and then he was discontented. He thought home was dull, the pleasures of the country insipid, and he sighed for the gayer and brighter scenes which he had once delighted in.

It was a struggle for Mr. Newton to bring himself to consent to Henry's proposal that he should return to New York. Nor would

he have consented for a moment, but for his son's repeated and solemn assurances that he would devote himself strictly to business, and never give any occasion for anxiety on his account. He also proposed that his younger sister should accompany him to the city, and attend school during the winter. Thus would he enjoy her society in the evenings, after his duties for the day were over, and she would be as a guardian angel to watch him and restrain him from evil. There was in this proposal so much evidence of sincerity and determination to lead a life of pure and manly virtue, that Mr. Newton once more sacrificed his own views of duty, and his own wishes, to the earnest solicitations of his son, and Henry and his sister were soon in the city, a new situation having been found for the young man, where, after a short period of service, he would succeed to a partnership in the concern.

I have already related what has transpired between the time of his return to New York

and the night when I was going through M—— street, on my way home. He had taken to play ; its fatal fascination had beguiled him ; all his pledges, extorted by parental love, and given with filial reverence, had been disregarded : even Mary Wilton's love had been forgotten, and a sister's prayers by night and day, her threatenings to reveal to others his dangers, and to beg her father to take him home, were lost upon him. Madness was in his heart! Deeper and still deeper he plunged into the meshes of vice, till even his sister's *hope* was all but spent. In one of his often visits to the gaming tables, he has forgotten the pledge which he had given to return early, and his devoted sister, braving the exposure of a solitary walk through the streets of the city, and regardless of the cold and storm that were enough to prevent any one but the bold from venturing out, she has resolved to make one desperate effort to deliver her brother from the snares in which he was caught, and save him, if

possible, from the ruin that seemed to be at hand.

We had reached the house. I found the number, and rang the bell. We waited in painful silence for some moments before the bell was answered; but at length it was cautiously opened by a servant, and, on our attempting to enter, we were told that this was a private house, and the family had retired. Here was an unexpected difficulty. Yet I had already discovered in the manner of the servant something that gave the lie to his assertion, and telling him that we knew where we were, I ordered him to show us the way.

We stepped into the hall, and he conducted us down stairs, and through a long passage into a large room, which, as we entered it, almost stifled us with its foul, steaming, suffocating atmosphere. The quick eye of the young lady speedily singled out the object of her search, among the many tables around which were seated parties of midnight gamblers deep in play.

Not one of them noticed us as we entered. The steady fixedness of every eye upon the game was terrible. It was but a moment before she rushed behind him, and, twining her arms around his neck, whispered in his ear, "Henry, have you forgotten your own sister?" He started from his seat, and was about to break out in a rage at the boldness of the girl to venture into such a place; and shame must have seized his heart, too, at the thought that he was detected thus in the midst of his guilt. Before he could speak, she laid her hand on his arm, and checking his anger, promised to explain it all to him on the way home, if he would only leave his play and go with her. "You must go," she said; "I shall never leave you an instant until you are yourself again." He found remonstrance was useless, and making a hasty apology to his companions, whose bitter sneers fell on his ear as he turned away, he gave his arm to his sister, and they left the house together.

In the street she thanked me for my at-

tention, and, on my informing her of my profession, and of my interest in the errand which had brought us for a few moments in company, she asked me to call. And I did call, with a strong desire to know more of the fate of Henry Newton.

It is less than a year since I first met him. It is less than two years since he first came to this city. But what ravages have those years made in his character, and in the hearts of those that loved him! For a brief season after the brave attempt of his sister to rescue him from the destroyer, he abandoned his haunts, and inspired her heart again with hope. The gleam of sunshine was transient. The passion for play was the mightiest emotion of his soul, and no earthly tie was strong enough to hold him back. It is needless for me to speak of the efforts his sister made to restrain and reclaim him, nor of the wild rejection he gave to every entreaty which she pressed upon him. His father's authority was invoked in vain; his Mary's love was brought

to bear upon his heart, but he despised it. He was joined to his idols, and wanted to be let alone. The sister, worn with his sinful career, and powerless to hold him back, returned home. The father has since sought him out, and attempted to save him, but he is on the high-road to ruin, if not already in the pit.

CHAPTER IV.

SIMON WILSON, THE DROVER BOY.

THOSE who learn life in the city from these sketches, must form a *sad* opinion of it. I have told only tales of sorrow, the "shadows" of life; while the picture has had no "lights" to gladden it. Well, there is a bright side to it, and I could in the circle of my acquaintance find stories to tell you that are full of what the world calls "good;" and the recital of which will waken pleasant feelings in the breast.

There is Simon Wilson—nobody will know him by that name, and as my sketch is from the life, I choose to hide his other under this—when I was a boy, up in the country, Simon was a boy too—a cow-boy; on the farm which his master worked, Simon was kept as the boy of all work, run-

ning of errands, bringing in wood, "putting out" the horses, and all those little odds and ends of things that the regular hands could not see to, were left for him. Of course, he was ordered about by every one, from the milk-maid, who made him wait on her whenever she caught him idle, up to the rough farmer, who kicked him whenever he found him standing still. Simon had a hard time of it on that farm, and often, when going to bed in a cold garret, where the snow blew thick and fast through the cracks upon his scant bed-clothes, he wished that he might get away from that farm and do something for himself. And when the harsh voice of the old farmer startled him from his slumbers in the gray of the morning, and Simon heard him crying at the foot of the stairs, "Hullo! there, you lazy rascal, if you don't make haste and come down, I'll help you," the shivering lad wished, from the bottom of his heart, that he could find some way of escape from the miserable fate to which he was doomed.

The farmer was in the habit of driving cattle to market, and on one occasion being short of a hand to help, he told Simon to brush up and come along. It was a short operation for him to brush up—his *best* was a poor affair—but he was in ecstasy at the thought of getting off from the farm into the world, and he was very soon rigged for the journey. And a rougher looking drover never stopped at Bull's Head than Simon Wilson, when, for the first time, he made his entry into the city of New York, in the rear of some three hundred cattle, which the farmer was bringing to market. A wag at the tavern was struck with the uncouth appearance of the youth, and determined to have a joke at his expense.

"I say, my boy," said the wag, "what would you be willing to work for by the day?"

Simon thought he had found something to do, and that the great object of his hopes and thoughts while driving his cattle from Dutchess county was about to be realized.

"Waal," said he, "I ain't partikeler, most anything you are a mind to give. I don't like farming, and I thought as how I'd come down to York and see what there was a going on. I guess you and I 'll agree about the wages."

"Very well," said the wag, "I'll tell you what I want you to do. You may go out into the yard and stand there for the cattle to rub against. You are just about *rough enough* for *that*."

Now that is not a very refined joke, I admit, and rather too coarse for these pages, but it is a fact and saves me time in giving the reader an idea of the outer man of our Simon when he first came into these parts. The boys laughed at him as he sauntered about the streets, but philosopher as he was, he paid no attention to them. His head was at work. Here was the place for business. He saw it at a glance, and scratching his carroty head, he thought of ways and means to get into the great market-house and run his chance with the rest. Simon

returned to the farm with his master, in the course of a few days, resolved to be a man. He would show himself trustworthy, and then he would be trusted. By-and-by something would turn up, and he would seize upon it to improve his situation, but while he was here, he would do the best he could for his employer. This was in the spirit of the scripture, that speaks of him who is faithful in a little being faithful also in much. His master saw the change that had come over the boy, and was pleased to encourage him. He intrusted him with more and more of his business ; sending him to the village to make small purchases when they were necessary, and some months afterward, he actually despatched Simon to the city with a small drove of cattle. Had the boy been suddenly made president of the United States, he could scarcely have been more sensible of the responsibility resting upon him. And he performed his duty faithfully, and returned home to give an account of his stewardship. The farmer was highly grati-

fied with the promptness and business-tact of the young man, and gradually committed more and more of his business to his hands, until, when Simon came of age, and he was now able to choose for himself where he would go, the farmer was willing to give him any wages he might name, if Simon would only consent to remain and superintend his affairs. But the young man thought of the city, and after a few months' labor on the farm to earn something with which to start in business, he came down to New York, on foot, with a bundles of clothes tied up in a cotton pocket-handkerchief, slung over his shoulder on a stick. He was rather unsuccessful at first in finding employment; his rustic appearance being against him, and he was finally under the necessity of engaging as a hand on a North river sloop. He was soon the master of a sloop. It was not a very long time before he was the owner of a sloop. It was a short step from a sloop to a steamboat, and Simon Wilson invested his earnings in that business. He was suc-

cessful. Keeping his eyes wide open, attending constantly to business, and fulfilling his engagements so strictly that his word was as good as his bond, he rose to distinction in his line. He went ashore to attend to matters there, while his rapidly accumulating property was employed on the water. Simon Wilson became known on 'change. He began to dabble in stocks. Prudent, cool, even cunning at times, he bought and sold at the very nick of time, and his wealth rolled in like a flood.

Yesterday I was walking up Broadway, and a splendid carriage, drawn by elegant bays, drew up at Stewart's; a couple of delicate girls stepped out as daintily, while the liveried footman held the door, as if their pretty feet had never been upon the ground in the world, and as they tripped by me, I perceived they were Simon's daughters! Yes, there they were. Simon married shortly after he was fairly started in business, and now keeps his carriage; lives in great style in the upper part of the

city; rides down pretty much every day; and in very pleasant weather you may see these two girls, fifteen and seventeen, or thereabouts, lolling in the luxurious carriage, as much at ease as if they had been born with a silver spoon in their mouths. Happy Simon! my young readers will say. And the psalmist said, "Men will praise thee when thou doest well by thyself."

And yet I have a private notion that you are mistaken, my innocent reader. Simon was not happy, I admit it, when he did "chores" for the farmer in Dutchess; but he might have been and ought to have been; and had he kept on at the old business, and settled in that neighbourhood, and lived and laboured in the free, rough country of his birth and childhood, he would have been a happier man than he ever has been since. He has never slept so soundly here in his handsome mansion as he did in the farmer's garret: he wakes oftener in the night than he did then, and rolls over, thinking of his stocks and steamboats; and many a time

he has sighed after the rustic pleasures of that farmer life, sweeter to the heart and longer to be loved and remembered, than those more brilliant and costly which gold has got him in this proud city. And then Simon, and Simon's wife, and Simon's daughters, find that his wealth will not bring them into *that* society, wealthy men, and wealthy men's wives and daughters, wish for, and can not be happy without. In this democratic country of ours, as soon as a man gets money enough to keep a carriage and live without work, he claims to belong to the *upper* classes, and it is no small drop of gall in his cup if this very natural claim is called in question. But it takes more than money to make a gentleman, and therefore not a few of our "fellow-citizens" have to put up with the *inconveniences* of that position which worth, education, and manners, or want of all, have made them fit for, while they look up with envy and ill-concealed mortification at the loftier heights to which they would gladly, but can not attain.

The full *equality* that reigns in the country, is one of the greatest comforts of society there. Nobody *looks up* to anybody. An evening party is made up of *the neighbours*, and none are excluded because they are not good enough society! "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," and surely, knowing nothing of the artificial distinctions of life, the plain people in Simon Wilson's sphere, when Simon was a boy, were happier far than Simon or his neighbours in the upper end of Broadway. If this opinion is called in question by any of the readers of these sketches, I shall not argue the matter with them. I speak from observation, and if there are not more heart-aches and head-aches here in this proud city than in the green valleys of the river counties, then have I lived in both to little purpose. Its evidence is on every face you meet, and you meet so many faces daily, that the very sight of them is bewildering, and it is a relief to turn from studying physiognomy, as you walk, to mineralogy among the paving-stones.

CHAPTER V.

THE BARBER BROKER.

THERE, I just passed a "gentleman of colour;" he walked with the air of a *man;* and his very step seemed to say that he was somebody. Would you like to hear a word of his history, to know what there is in that man to mark him from his fellows, and make him worth a place in these chronicles of Gotham? A few years ago he was a barber in Nassau street; a steady, industrious man, and having made a little money, he invested it successfully, and his little grew to more, till he shut up his barber-shop and went into trade. He went to the West Indies as supercargo of a vessel, the most of the freight being his own, and here he was quite as successful in his operations as he was at home. His property was

speedily doubled, and he spread his sails for still wider business, till he became a well-known trader. He left the seas and set up in Wall street, and now deals in stocks, and in his line now commands the respect and confidence of his fellow-men. I do not know that he is in business now, but I meet him occasionally, as I did yesterday, in Broadway, and it is with feelings of pleasure that I observe one of this race, who has succeeded by honest industry and perseverance in so far subduing the prejudices of the community, that he has been enabled to rise above the condition of his class and make something of himself. I have always felt a deep interest in these coloured people. It seems hard that they should be shut out of the avenues to wealth, and honour, and usefulness, and their souls must be ground down by the oppression of caste, as if the bonds were on their necks. I was in a barber's-shop a few months ago, and I said to the man who was shaving me, "Do you send your children to school?"

'Oh, no," said he; "why should I send them to school? They will pick up enough learning for my business, and they can never be anything more than barbers."

I felt sorry for him, and to give him some consolation I added, "But education will make them happier even if they never follow any other employment."

The barber sighed, and remarked with evident pain: "You have touched the sore spot exactly. If I do not give them *education*, they will be contented as barbers, and in a measure as happy as men in their line; but if they had learning they would never be satisfied here, and would therefore be more miserable than if left in their ignorance."

There was reason and truth in these melancholy remarks, and I saw the poor fellow felt what he said. Again I might recite the line,

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

Knowledge may make a man discontented,

and unless it may be made available to increase his present, or prospective usefulness or happiness, you can hardly expect that he will make any great effort to secure it for himself or his children.

A strange world this is we live in, and its ups and downs are so sudden and singular, that he is a fool who makes calculations upon anything here as if it were sure to stand. I know of nothing in this world that men make (but the pyramids) that is worth calling substantial, and the pyramids will not stand for ever. Fortunes are made suddenly here, it is true, and often lost as suddenly. The British steamer arrived a day or two ago with news that the crops had failed in England, and the price of flour went up in an instant; a few men making thousands of dollars by the operations of a single day. A speck of a war-cloud in the horizon will sink the price of stocks, and strip away the gilded hopes of the speculator. These are the changes of the hour. But there are many who take a slower and

a surer road to wealth and pleasure, and they sometimes find what they seek, and having amassed a "handsome property," retire to enjoy it in the shades of rural life. Others again make their way to wealth by the heart, a queer path to be sure, and who knows what it means. There is a lady who went to the district school with me in the country, twenty years ago. She was the daughter of poor, but *very* respectable parents, and they had *connexions* living in New York, and when Isabella was old enough to go from home visiting, she came to the city to make a visit. Her fresh, full-blown beauty, like one of our mountain roses, drew many an eye after her as she made her first appearance in society; and not many months elapsed before she had the offer of the hand of one of the most promising young merchants in Pearl street. She married him; he had no care for money *with* a wife, as he was making enough *without*, and so they married for pure love. Why should they not? And now my old

school-mate Isabel, her husband having been in successful business twenty years, is at the head of a fine establishment, with servants and horses at her command, her princely mansion up-town is furnished in splendid style, and as she presses her elegant carpets, and catches a glimpse of herself in a thousand-dollar pier-glass on the wall, she can scarcely believe that it is the same Isabel that used to climb the rail-fences with me when we went to pick blackberries. And it is *not* the same Isabel; a change, and to me a sad one, has come over the playmate of my youth; she does not know the friends of her childhood, or at least my plain black dress is an effectual disguise when I meet her in Broadway; and if she has forgotten *me*, her memory must have suffered.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SPANISH GENERAL'S WIDOW.

I MET with an incident recently, that so completely illustrates the uncertainty of this world, and the vanity of trusting in wealth for permanent enjoyment, that I will tell it here, instead of moralizing on the general subject; for I have found that the most of readers prefer to have the story, and then they will make reflections to suit themselves; but if they are treated to the reflections before the story, they are apt to do without both.

In the year 1800 — that is, just forty-six years ago, as a very little arithmetic sufficeth to make apparent — Julia Bell was at work in a small fancy-shop in New York city. This is a very matter-of-fact way of intro-

ducing the story, but the rest is in keeping with it. She was from the country, and had come here, not to visit, but to work. The child of poor parents in New Jersey, she had been left an orphan at an early age, and thrown upon the charity of a *heartless* world. So we call the world; and yet it is not *heartlessness* that builds a home for the orphan, and makes comfortable provision for the poor. There was not such systematic provision made at the time that Julia had need of it; but when she was deprived of her natural protectors, there were those who took an interest in her; and when she was old enough to do something for herself, they tried to find her a place. She had too delicate a frame for housework, and there was a neatness of manner, and readiness to do whatever she put her hand to, that led those who had the charge of her to think of putting her *at a trade.* This was what it was called in the country, and yet it sounds somewhat coarse when applied to the labor of tender hands. It was this that led her

guardians to look after a situation for her in New York, and here she was brought and *bound* till she was eighteen. Julia was in her sixteenth year when she sat down at her work in the shop, in the midst of a dozen girls who had been familiar with the city, the most of them, all their lives. I have not said that Julia was a beauty — she did not know it herself; but the instant she entered the scene of her labors, every one who saw her knew it, and marked her accordingly. It is one of the worst features that I ever saw in the characters of young women, that they are envious of one another's good looks! I have noticed it in schools, in families, and wherever young ladies gather, that whereas wit, talent, accomplishment, will extort admiration and praise from the companions of her who possesses one or all of them, *beauty* begets envy. Not always, for sometimes good nature will disarm and expel it; but it is a very common thing, and was certainly a fact when Julia Bell, in the bloom of youth-

ful loveliness, radiant with health, and yet slightly paled with anxiety and fear, was brought into the shop among these girls, and took her seat at work. A slight titter passed around, and significant winks and tosses of the head were interchanged, as the thought struck each of them, that the handsomest girl in the room was the one that had just come.

Julia Bell, the orphan girl, the child of the public, a poorhouse girl, is now at service. Days of weariness were before her; and her support, the food that she must have, and her clothing, was to be her only pay for years of toil. But Julia had a cheerful heart, and it shone in her sweet face, like the smile of a spring morning, and she went to her work to make herself useful, as if a fortune were in prospect as the reward of her industry. Such a girl could scarcely fail to make friends of all who knew her. Overflowing good nature melted and won the hearts of her shopmates, while her skill and faithfulness soon showed her em-

ployers that she was one of a thousand. Julia had not been more than eighteen months in the city, when the mistress of the establishment promoted her to the more responsible and attractive duty of selling the goods in the front store. This was an era in her life. She had been in the little back room at work, and up stairs to sleep, day after day, with scarcely an hour in one of them, but Sunday, for air and exercise; and she had, time and again, sighed for something to do, that would bring her into contact, if not communion, with the world. There is a gift of gracefulness as well as beauty, that nature sometimes bestows, and of a truth, our Julia Bell seemed to have been a favorite with nature in the distribution of these gifts. She had the air of one born to please. This seemed not to be — how could it be — the result of imitation, for what had she seen of the world? It was natural to her, and all the more winning and striking because it was no effort. Her words, her smile, her motions, were nature

in her sweetest forms, and many were the observations made by persons of birth and fortune, upon the face and manners of the handsome shop-girl. Yet all unconscious was Julia, all this time, that others were better pleased with her than with her companions. It was all the comfort the poor girl had, to try and make herself agreeable, and surely she was to be commended for seeking it in such an innocent way. And as Julia's appearance was now a source of profit to the establishment, for not a few were drawn to the store by the remarks of those who had been there and seen her, Julia found her *means* increased to make more of a show, for the lady-proprietor found her account in setting off the charms of her head-clerk to the best advantage.

Among a party of ladies and gentlemen that one day dropped in at the store, for there were not so many fancy stores in Broadway forty-five years ago as there are now, and crowds in the most fashionable of the few were not uncommon, was a Spanish

officer, whose fancy was more taken with Julia's beauty than with anything that he saw for sale. He spoke of her as they left the store and his gay friends laughed at him, and rallied him for being suddenly smitten with a shop-girl. The spirited officer took offence at their raillery, and promised himself that he would go and see her again, more because he had been laughed at about her, than for any reason that he could assign. It was easy to find an excuse, and the next day he wanted something in the fancy line, and the next day he had occasion to go for something else, and he soon became a regular customer, whose calls were expected. He was fairly taken, and the proud spirit of a Spaniard yielded to the charms of a poor but beautiful maiden, whose simple gracefulness of manners pleased him more than all the dark-eyed beauties he had ever seen in the Peninsula. He was a youth of fortune, and was now across the ocean to see the world: the thought was very easy to him that he could carry off this girl as a

prize, and that in his own country no one would know her origin, while her beauty would be her passport, and his sword would secure for her the position she deserved, if it should ever be questioned for an instant. I have no *gift* for telling love-stories, and therefore I pass over in silence, leaving the ready reader to imagine, the ways and the means by which the Spaniard managed to make himself acquainted with Julia Bell; nor shall I pause to tell you how she was naturally disposed to listen to the tale that he breathed into her fascinated ear. She was now nearly eighteen, a few weeks more and she could decide for herself, as to her heart or her hand. The weeks were soon by, Julia was herself again, and it is not to be wondered at, that she preferred the dazzling prospects which were held out to her by the young Spaniard, to the less romantic and dull realities of imprisonment for life with hard labor in the city. She married him, and went to Spain with him, and there shone as a star of the first magnitude among

the grandees of the land. There was not a pleasure that wealth could buy which was not hers; not a luxury to be longed for but was flung into her lap with a free hand, by her indulgent lord of a husband. It was indeed a new world to the orphan-girl of Jersey. The vision of fairy-land could not be more unreal to her eyes, than the magnificence in which she revelled, and if the unbounded love of her husband, who was as proud of her as if she had been a princess, and her fortune a mine of gold, could have made her happy, she would have been in paradise.

Spain is, and was a theatre of revolutions. Julia had cast her lot with one who was on the top of the wave, now borne on to power and fortune by the tide of events, but the next wave might sweep him to utter ruin. So it was. The fickle multitude, tired of the idol of the day, had dethroned him, and with the party were stranded the hopes and fortunes of our young officer. Nor was this the worst of it for Julia. She had his

heart and could she have had *him*, they might have borne the reverses together, and fought on in hope of better times. But he fell on the battle-field, and she suddenly found herself the widow of an officer who was on the defeated side, and therefore a rebel and conspirator: his estates were seized upon, and she was compelled to fly with what little personal property, money, jewels, her wardrobe, &c., she could in a moment lay her hands on, and making the best of her way to this country, she arrived in New York after an absence of nearly twenty years, almost as destitute as when she first came to the city from New Jersey. But she had resources within herself, a will to do, and with heroic courage she resolved *to go to work:* trusting in Providence, and helping herself as well as she could. For years she managed to earn a decent support, and making a few friends whose kindness she often experienced when her strength was inadequate for the burdens she had assumed, she rubbed along. By-and-by the infirmities of

age overtook her; the friends whom she had found, died, removed, or forgot her, and old folks are not apt to make new friends: her scanty means became still more scanty, and at last she was reduced to actual want. What was to be her fate? Must she starve in the midst of plenty? Shall a city like this allow *an old lady* to die for want of food? Very likely she would have perished thus but for the heavenly charity of a band of females, who had formed an association to seek for objects on whom to expend their alms. These pious ladies, in their walks of mercy, found her, confined to her bed, such as it was, with sickness, hunger, and old age: they supplied her immediate wants, and under the sunshine of their kindness she revived. Health and some strength came back, and she was able to be up again. But they could not sustain her without aid from the public charities, and were reluctantly obliged to intrust her case "to the proper authorities."

It was in a "house for the poor" that I found her. It is not more than six months since I saw her there. A few of the facts in her remarkable history were mentioned to me by a visiter who had been familiar with them, and said to her:—

"You have seen better days, madam?"

"O, yes, sir," she replied, "I used to ride in my coach and four," and her eyes lighted up with ardour at the thought of what she had been, for *Julia Bell* always looked on the bright side of things.

"I hope you are enabled," said I, "to say with one of old, The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." But I had not touched the right chord. The old woman had never honoured God in her prosperity, and now that the cold and cheerless winds of adversity were howling around her, she found no peace in believing in the widow's friend. I urged her to seek the Lord, even in the last days of her pilgrimage, and assured her that in him she would find more satisfying and

enduring joy than the brightest earthly scenes had ever shed upon her path.

But the heart was cold and hard. Sensibility itself had died within her, and I suppose she has by this time gone to try one more change, and that the last. Such is the story of the Spanish General's Widow: nothing of incident in it, and no effort at description to set it off; but it is a picture of life as it is, and as such it comes within my plan to tell it.

I said it is a strange world we live in. Its changes are sudden sometimes, terrible often. "There is nothing true but heaven." I know it, and I could not doubt it if I should try. As I look along the signs of the stores in any one street of business, and recall the names that were there twenty years ago, it seems as if a pestilence must have swept the old inhabitants off, and a new generation had arisen to take their places. Men of business have often made the same remark to me respecting the changes that are taking place in their ranks.

and I can see it going on from year to year. There is sadness in the sight and in the thought.

And yet, after all, what are riches and poverty, what is the pleasure and honour that wealth can purchase, what is the pain that want of it will cause, compared with the inheritance that awaits us just ahead? Here we live but for another life, and that life is endless. We lay up riches, and die before we enjoy them. We live a few years here without them, and die to become the joint inheritors of realms of glory. It is the *character* we bear that seals the title-deeds to bliss or wo hereafter. What will it matter fifty years hence to you, Mr. Simon Wilson, that you were the richest man on 'change to-day? Suppose you make your bed of bank-bills, and sleep under a canopy of gold, and shine with diamonds, will your wealth buy peace of conscience in a dying hour, or a drop of water when the last ray of hope has been shut from the cavern of despair? You will forget your

sumptuous living, and splendid equipage, and costly furniture, when the last fire burns up the earth, and the elements melt with fervent heat. These are things of to-day only. Eternity is before you! You are to live for ever: to feel as tenderly the power of pleasure or of pain, as when now you hear of the sudden rise of your town-lots, or feel a sharp knife piercing your flesh. Exquisite joy or misery is to be your portion, Simon Wilson, world without end! And who is more insane than you, if you make gold your god, and worship it a few years only, and then, then, Simon, leave it all, and spend ETERNITY in tears of bitter, vain regret.

My philosophy has a future life to spend itself upon. I believe in a world to come. And that world is to be a world without change. As we enter upon it, we shall continue for ever and ever, only that we shall go onward in the line of progress which we commence. *That is the world for me.* This is so short, so uncertain, so unsatisfying,

that I mean to use it only as a means to an end. It shall serve as a *school* in which we shall be trained for the next; when that comes, and He who put us here in this training process will say the glad words, "Come up hither," I will be glad to leave all below and enter on that which he hath prepared for those that love him. I will not fret at losses, or repine at poverty, or murmur at swift reverses; it will all be right hereafter, and I shall rejoice in it then, if not before.

CHAPTER VII.

CITY CHARITY.

A FEW weeks since, in the city of Philadelphia, a young lady of family, fortune, and beauty, was walking in the streets, and she met a little girl trying in vain to get home with two baskets of fuel which she had picked up. They were too much for the poor thing to carry. She had yielded to despair, and was weeping bitterly, when the young lady in silks came by, and seeing her distress, and the cause of it, at once offered to take the baskets and help her on with her heavy load. The little girl was all unused to such kindness, and, with delicacy quite unlooked for in such a garb, declined to put the lady to so much trouble. "Then I will stay here," said the lady, "and watch

one basket, while you carry the other home." To this arrangement the confiding child consented, and there the elegant and fashionable heiress stood in her beauty, and kept guard over the basket of chips, while the little girl ran home and returned.

I tell this story as more truly characteristic of a generous and benevolent heart, more worthy of record and eulogy, than the deeds of many *philanthropists* of the world, whose fame is world-wide, whose praise is trumpeted in the newspapers while they live, and graven in marble when they die. There is a large infusion of charity to be seen of men in the benevolence of the age. I know an elderly lady whose name is on the published list of many of the societies of the city for the relief of this, that, and the other class of suffering humanity; but the "poor girls" who wait on her ladyship, and the poor trades-people that come to her for their honest dues, and the poor relations that would be glad to have some of her superfluous dresses and ornaments, never re-

member her in their thanksgivings. They have no reason, *then*, to bear her in mind. All the good she does is in the organic way. She is a lady-patroness of several popular associations; but she would as soon think of going on a mission to Kamtschatka, as to enter a cellar to carry a cold dinner to a starving family, or to stand in the street and watch a basket while the ragged owner was running home with another. Yet she thinks she is a notably benevolent woman, and the world thinks so too; and when she dies, there will be an obituary eulogy of her in the Observer half a column long.

Not a word of censure does all this imply upon those who do good in this way. This age of ours is distinguished for its systems of doing good, and, beyond all doubt, the charity of the kind-hearted is thus carried to many a habitation of wo that otherwise would never be reached. The wisdom, as well as the love, of the compassionate has been employed to devise ways and means to search and discover poverty and distress

in all its secret lurking-places, and to relieve it there. It is a blessed thing to find a child of sorrow in retirement, shrinking away from the stare of the unfeeling world, and to pour oil and wine into the wounds of that sore heart, and thus make gladness to flourish where just now was grief only, with no hope for brighter days to come.

Perhaps it is a *morbid* sympathy, if such a passion may become diseased, that leads me to look into the condition of the various classes of my fellow-men, to learn what they want, or rather what they *need*, and to take a common interest in every wise and practicable scheme for the benefit of the human race. It is a wicked world we live in, and wherever sin reigns misery lives; and he is a benefactor who pours one drop of comfort on an aching heart, or plants one motive to do better in an erring mortal.

Just drop your business for a moment, or wait till after dinner, if you dine as early as four o'clock—it will be rather late to start at five, but it will answer then—and

let us take a walk into the city, and see how the world lives. This is Chambers street. You see its houses are substantial, and every one of them, almost, is plainly such a house as good families down town live in. But from this street you can throw a stone to the vilest part of the great city of New York — to the region where the most squalid vice and the most abject poverty and wretchedness unite to hold their orgies, fearful and awful orgies too, such as the heathen might shudder at, and which the Christians of this city regard either as unworthy of an attempt to abolish, or as beyond the reach of remedy. Nothing ever moves me more than this almost union of extremes in the city: I have seen a poor blind beggar leaning against the wall of the house where gorgeous magnificence was displaying itself in a luxurious banquet, the wine of which would cost more money than it would take to make that beggar comfortable for a life-time. One of the best men the world ever knew was troubled at the diversities in the condition of men,

when he saw the wicked rolling in wealth and faring sumptuously every day, while the virtuous were starving. It took the philosophy of the sanctuary to set his mind at ease about it; and the parable of Dives and Lazarus, which the Great Teacher gave us, scatters the last doubt as to the final issue of the matter. The next world will make up for all defects in this: and if we are disturbed when we see the beggar leaning against the palace of the proud sinner, let us wait till the books are opened for the eternal settlement of accounts. If that beggar have the heart of Lazarus, touched with the love of Him who, when here, was a homeless wanderer "o'er the world's wide waste," when he comes to the house not made with hands, he shall rejoice in the arms of angels, and sleep in the bosom of Abraham. Through gates of pearl he shall enter, and walk the golden streets, and reign as a king and priest for ever. This may be the beggar's portion, in that better land to which we are hastening.

Cheer up, then, lone child of poverty! Thou hast few friends in this cold world of ours. The *society* for the relief of such as thou art may have never found thee yet, and we have all learned that it is unsafe to give to street-beggars, so that thou mayst never have another dinner while thou livest. And when thou diest in the street, or in the park, where thou seekest a night's lodging, with Jacob's pillow under thy uncovered head, the city will bury thee in Potter's field, and perhaps the doctors will have thy body for their knives, and thy bones for a skeleton; but *then* the angels will be thy companions and heaven thy home, *if*—and a great *if* it is—thou hast an interest in Him who had not where to lay his head. Poor beggar now; rich beggar, blessed beggar, then!

But I believe I began this sketch with the intention of speaking of various plans on foot in this city to relieve the sufferings of the multitude; such an attempt will be true to my original purpose, which is to show

the way in which people live, and move, and have their being here, in this world in miniature. Last winter some one undertook to make an investigation into the number of persons in the city of New York who live on charity, or are so near to want that they receive aid from the hand of the public every year. The man who thus attempted to take the gauge of human misery, obtained returns from twenty or thirty different societies and institutions, some of them voluntary and others municipal, some private and others public, some religious and others not so religious, and the result was such as astonished every one. The correctness of the report was called in question, and the examination was made again. After all allowances were made for mistakes and repetitions of the same name, where the applicant had been aided by two or three societies, it was still impossible to resist the conclusion, that as many as one person in every *seven* in the city is thus assisted by the hand of charity every year! There is

no room for a doubt on the subject. I have looked over the tables, incredulous too at first, but had to give in, and admit the facts, though it gave me the heart-ache. But we will not rest under the painful impression, that all these thousands are actually dependent for their bread upon the bounty of the benevolent. Far, very far from it. This would be reducing us to a point in the scale of public prosperity far below the cities of Europe. But the truth is simply this: that in the city New York there are multitudes who earn by their daily labour just enough to maintain themselves and those dependent on them; and if sickness lays its hand on the head of a family, or one of the members, the income ceases altogether, or is inadequate to the increased expense, and aid must be obtained from abroad, or there is instant suffering for want of it. Hence the "dispensaries," to furnish medical advice, and medicines also, to those who are too poor to pay for them.

Drop in, almost every day, at one of them

as you are passing, and if you are given to seeking entertainment *from realities*, make a pilgrimage to one of these dispensaries, as you would to the pool of Bethesda, and there you will see on long rows of benches, men and women, hundreds of them crowded side by side, waiting, as did they of old, not for the moving of the waters, but for their turn to receive attention. As rapidly as their cases can be looked into, they receive their written prescriptions and the order that provides the needed medicine, with which they hasten home, to swallow it themselves or administer it perhaps to a sick child.

Yet even this sight is not half so affecting as a visit will be to the almshouse department in the building in the rear of the city-hall. Go there of a cold morning and you will see decrepit old women, forlorn young women with infants in their arms, decayed old men, and men with part of a leg off, halt and maimed, some with a basket to get a small allowance with which to eke out the day. This is the most *real* poverty of any-

thing in the midst of us. In the commissioner's room you will find a committee of grave men who hear the tale of wo from each new-comer; and when the truth of the story has been established by as minute inquiry as is necessary or possible in the case, a written order is given by which the poor wretch is entitled to so many potatoes or so much meat every day, and with this order he or she departs rejoicing. Oh! it must be hard to be poor! God be thanked for the little that keeps us above such want as this.

And then I have extended my walks of observation, not to speak of them as having any higher end, still further, and have explored the hospital on Broadway, and the almshouse in the upper part of the city, where the poor are provided with a home, such as it is: where the corporation, in times now gone, were wont on certain occasions to have for themselves provided a sumptuous feast, as if in mocking contrast with the fate and the fare of the permanent

boarders of that great establishment. It does one good to go there, or to such places; to see the last estate of the poor; the refuge which poverty finds when the last resource of independent living has been exhausted; and he must have a very hard heart indeed, who will not *feel* grateful that his lot has been so ordered that as yet he is not an inmate of a poorhouse. Here are some who have seen better days: who have lived richly in the city: one or two had kept their carriages, and been envied as they shone in Broadway; but *fortune*, as the heathen of this generation call *providence*, disappointed their hopes; their wealth melted like snow in summer; their carriages, and houses, and gold, all disappeared; and through one degree of want to another they sank, till they were housed here at last. And here we may be! I never visited even a mad-house, without thinking that that might be my home before I went to my last resting-place. It is well to bear this in mind, and be ready for the worst.

There is, however, one fact that is a *consolation* to a man who tries to do the right thing in this changing world. It is, that the wilful vices of the inhabitants of these refuges of the poor have reduced them to this condition. Search and see. Pause at the bed-side of that dying old man, and if honest now, he will tell you of sin that paved his walk to this end of the town. Drink, strong drink, has floated thousands into this snug harbor, for so it may well be called by those who come from the storm-tossed gulf of a drunkard's home. And those whom vice has brought here, now find that the way of transgressors is hard, yet would they go the same gait, and reap the same harvest of bitter fruit, if they had life to live over again. It is not penance that makes the heart better; and as braying in a mortar will not beat folly out of a fool, or beat sense into his head, so true is it that the sufferings which vice brings with it, do not make the sufferers sick of sin. They seem to love it and hug it when the iron

enters their souls. Forgetting this principle, not a few modern social reformers have set on foot schemes to convert criminals into decent men and women, while they have overlooked the inborn and inbred love of sin which must be eradicated by heavenly grace, before he who has been accustomed to do evil will learn to do well.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OLD LADIES.

But I am in an episode, and will come back to the thread if I can find it. On your way down from the almshouse, call, in Twenty-first street, at the asylum for aged and respectable indigent females. The matron will give you a welcome, and the visit will richly reward you. This is one of the pleasantest charities in the wide world. It takes old LADIES, so called in distinction from those whom we have just seen, because they have all of them been in different walks of life; in those walks to which the epithet *respectable* is familiarly applied, though I never could understand the *reason why* a poor honest man, who had travelled one road to the grave, was not just as respectable as another. But then the ways of the world

are not always to be understood by everybody. There are classes in society that are called respectable, and it would be hard to find their right to it; while others are voted as *low*, notwithstanding claims to the respect of men, which can not be disputed. I do not know by what code the managers of this charity decide the question of respectability, but I believe they make real worth the test, and that is the true one. The old woman who wants their aid may have been the wife of a cobbler or a senator, it matters not; if she have a good moral character, and such manners as will not make her company an annoyance to the rest, I suppose she will be reckoned a fair subject for the exercise of hospitality. There are various and very wise precautions taken to guard this charity against abuse, as it is easy to see that the introduction of one troublesome woman might make the house anything but pleasant to all the rest. To prevent such a misfortune as this, the benevolent women who direct the institution receive applications in

writing from the friends of those who wish to get an individual into the asylum, and then the case is examined into by a visiting committee, until they are satisfied she is a fair subject for their consideration. She then pays into the treasury, or her friends pay for her, the sum of fifty dollars, as an initiation fee ; which is not only something to aid the funds of the institution, but is also a sort of endorsement that the subject has *respectable* connexions. So the asylum is not open for paupers, but for those who, having known something of the comforts of life, would find a refuge to which they may flee in their old age. Its doors are not open to any that are under sixty years of age, and this provision is wise, as will be apparent on a moment's reflection. Then the applicant signs a release in favor of the institution of all the property she may have, which must be very little, and of all the property into the possession of which she may come hereafter: this is all right, as the asylum agrees to take care of her for the remainder of her

natural life, and whatever property she may bring or bequeath will aid in giving the same boon to others equally needy. These various and very reasonable preliminaries having been complied with, the doors of the asylum are thrown open for the reception of the old lady, and she enters to begin a new life, or rather, to spin out the latter end of one now nearly gone.

A singular community of old crones as you will find anywhere in the world, is this gathering of infirm, aged, and respectable females. I always had a reverence for old women. There is something about them that moves my heart more deeply and tenderly than the sight of an old man; and I was never, even when a boy, willing to laugh with others at the bent back or hooked nose that poverty and old age so often furnish to an old woman. I would rather minister to their relief, and waken a smile on their wrinkled brows. To one who could find any pleasure in the company of the "old and childish," it will be an occa-

sion of rare interest to enter their rooms and converse with them of the ways by which they have been led. They are fond of talking—old folks usually are; and if you will sit down sociably with them, and ask them of former days, and old friends, they will tell you tales to which you will listen with deep and fixed attention. One of their greatest *amusements* now, is to visit one another and talk about old times. The most infirm are in rooms on the lower floors, and the more active and able take the upper chambers, but the most of them are strong enough to get about from room to room, and even up and down stairs, to make visits, or to go to the dining hall. Some of them also visit their friends in the city, returning at a time that is agreed upon before they go, that there may be no ground for anxiety in consequence of their absence. Perhaps you could find in no other place such a variety of character and temper, as in this little household. One has been the subject of trials, disappointments, and reverses,

which, instead of being sanctified to her spiritual improvement, have *soured* all the springs of affection in her soul, and she is now so peevish and fretful, so discontented and suspicious, that nothing pleases her: she finds fault with her nurse and her food, her neighbours and herself, wishes she was dead sometimes, and is dreadfully afraid when she is a little sick lest death is indeed at hand. Another has seen prosperity, and has been so much accustomed to being waited upon that she has no thought of being able to do anything for herself: she wants somebody to be running for her all the time, and she thinks it very hard that she has to take things as they come, as the rest do. A third has found that her afflictions, poverty, and loss of friends, have been the means of weaning her affections from things below, and her treasure is now in heaven; she has sweetly yielded her will to her heavenly Father's, and is quietly waiting till her change comes, that she may be admitted into the rest that remains for the people of

God. She loves not the world, but she is willing to wait all the days of her appointed time, and is only happier as the bright vision of the future opens on her dim eyes. The last time I was there, I sat down in her room in a low rocking-chair, with a listed seat, and taking her large-printed testament in my hand, I opened to the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel by St. John, and read: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions."—"I go to prepare a place for you." I said to her, after reading a few of the introductory verses:—

"Do you look forward to those mansions as soon to be yours?"

"Yes. I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies. It is now my consolation to look up to my Father's house in Heaven; and I am very near my journey's end. I shall soon be home."

"Home is a sweet word," I said to her; "have you never found it so?"

"When I was young," she said, "I had a home, as bright a one as the sun ever shone upon: parents and sisters and an only brother: we had everything that heart could ask, and a thought of sorrow never crossed our minds. But what a changing world this is! Our property was swept away from us by the failure of some for whom my father was security, and we were torn asunder to get our living the best way we could. The rest of the family are dead. I have struggled along one way and another, and at last have found a shelter for my old bones here. God has been good to me always."

"When did you begin to love God and serve him?"

"I was but a child when my mother taught me the way to Heaven, and I have always found it good to put my trust in the Lord. He has said that when my father and mother forsake me, He will take me up; and when I lost the parents that would have taken care of me if they had been

able, the Lord raised up other friends, and they have been kind far beyond my deserts. See what a nice place they have provided for me now that I am old and helpless. Here I am fed and clothed, nursed when I am sick, waited on as if I were a lady-born, and I have good company all the time, so that I don't think I could be better off anywhere. We ought to be very thankful for what the good Lord does for us in our old age."

I prayed with her, and the joy which she expressed as I took leave of her was enough, and more than enough, to repay me for my visit. Again and again she thanked me, and pressed my hand within her bony fingers, and asked me to come once more, and see her. I intend to. It does one good to visit such a house; to mingle with those on whom the hand of the Lord has pressed heavily, and to see the varied influences which affliction brings to bear on the human heart. Some hearts it softens; and the oil of Divine grace is poured in so gently and

healingly, that the sufferer feels that it is good to be afflicted. There is not a more beautiful sight out of heaven than a bruised spirit confidingly resting on Him who wounds that he may heal. The Christian graces thrive in such a soil, and bear ripe fruit for the praise of Him whose work it is to renew and save. I have known a woman who has been confined to her bed forty-three years—nearly the whole of her life—and she lies there still, and will probably never leave it till they lay her in the narrow bed where all the living are yet to lie. But she never murmurs. Nay, the very balm of peace appears to fill her heart, as she looks from her little window by the sea-side, and beholds the beauty of the world from which she is shut out, she rejoices in it with as free a spirit as if she could leap in the sunshine, and roam the fields as she did when a child.

When trials thus press us sore, and long years of suffering follow years, we learn a lesson of the value of Divine grace to sus-

tain the soul. Just now they carried by my window the body, or what was left of the body of a woman who has been slowly eaten up with a cancer in her side. I had never seen her, but have often heard of her sufferings ; for months she has been in anguish that no opiates could allay ; often gnashing her teeth with pain and groaning in the extremity of her distress, so as to melt into pity a heart of stone. But the precious love of Christ was her comfort through solitary and seemingly interminable nights of pain, when unable to lie down, and of course unable to sleep, she sat alone, while the insatiable disease, like the fabled vulture, gnawed at her vitals. Her friends often said she could not live another day in so much intensity of devouring pain, but she did live, and in the bitterest hours of her anguish a smile would light up her wan cheek, when the love of Christ was the theme of remark.

" Did Jesus thus suffer, and shall I repine ?"

she would say when sharp pain pierced like

a knife between her bones. And when death came, she met it, not as a relief from present suffering, for she was willing to suffer all the will of her heavenly Father, but as the gate through which she should enter the city and be for ever with the Lord! *No more pain!* What a land must that be where there is no more sorrow or suffering, where the hand of love, infinite love, wipes away all tears, and "the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul!"

One of the most *natural* things about this establishment, the Old Ladies' Asylum, is the anxiety which many feel to be buried in style! At first we would suppose that they who had felt poverty for long years, and had often been troubled to find the wherewithal *to live*, would care very little about the manner of their burial, yet what passion is more natural, and we might say universal among intelligent people. It is not a vain desire, but vanity may be readily excited with it, and so it surely is with these ladies, who sometimes manage to retain a

little sum of money which they intrust to a friend to keep closely, to be expended in the purchase of a silver plate for their coffins! And it is so expended. The name of the old lady is engraved upon the silver plate, the coffin is brought into the chapel, and there the funeral service is held before the withered remains are committed to their kindred dust. This chapel is the scene of many interesting services. Every sabbath-day, and often in the week, as many of the old ladies as can leave their rooms assemble here, and listen to the word of God. It was here, in this room, that the sainted Milnor preached his last sermon before he rested from his work, and it was a fitting close to his public labours. He was a good man, and it is pleasant to pause and strew a flower or two upon his tomb.

As this sketch is very desultory, I will finish it with a passage from real life in the city, that has frequent parallels, though not often is one of such decided interest made a matter of record.

"Take that, and that!" said a drunken father, as he kicked a little boy about the room, when he reeled in at the close of one of last winter's days. It was a drunkard's home! The only alleviation — no, that is not the word — the only circumstance that made it supportable was, that the children had never known any better days than those of misery, hunger, and cold. The father was a drunkard: the mother was a drunkard, the worst of the two, if worst there could be when both were at the very foot of the ladder, common drunkards. A drunken man is bad enough, but when vice riots in a woman's heart, it makes a hell of more intolerable wo. Presently the mother came in, as drunk as the father, and even more savage. A moment after she entered, a little girl, their only daughter, came in her way, and she gave her a blow that sent her headlong into the fire. The poor thing was shockingly burned before the miserable parents, in their state of intoxication, were able to render her any assistance. The next day

when the situation of the child was known, she was taken to the hospital, that she might receive suitable attention, though there was very little prospect of saving her life. She lingered along for some time, but the mother never came near her. Some benevolent ladies found the child in the hospital, and learning from her where she had lived, they went to see the mother, with the hope of doing something for her good. They found her under the influence of liquor, and of course insensible to the language of kindness. At another time they called, and spoke to her of her child now dying, and begged her to go and see her. She refused, and said she never wanted to see her again. "Can a mother forget?" Probably the love of strong drink is the only passion that takes such complete possession of the soul as to drown all other love. But even a more cruel illustration of the effect of it was to be seen in the child—*she did not want to see her mother.* Why should she? The child had never known the sweet power of

maternal tenderness, winning her heart and binding her to a mother's bosom ; and when she came to die in the cheerless ward of a great hospital, with strangers all around her, there was no yearning of the young heart for the home of her childhood. There is a *dreadfulness* about this that is distressing. What a home it must be, to which a child does not want to go to die ! The case of this little child had attracted much attention, and the ladies to whom I have already referred endeavoured to give her such religious instruction as was suited to her case, but it made little or no impression. Her ignorance of everything but sin was so deep and impenetrable, that all attempts to lead her to a sense of her situation were fruitless. She was now apparently near her end : she asked for a drink, and the attendant not bringing it soon enough to please her, the little child broke out *with curses* upon her, to the amazement and horror of those who were gathered around her. Would it be believed, that one so young had reached a

depth of depravity so fearful! And so she died. The child of a drunken mother, dying in an hospital with curses on her lips! Here is a whole sermon in this story of a few lines. And it doubtless brings out more of life in the city than many pages of detailed description. Hundreds of families dwell in the midst of us, in whose dwellings a beam of comfort, a ray of happiness, never shines. It is misery in the morning, worse at noon, wretchedness at night. The use of strong drink is the beginning, the parent of this misery. Strange, is it not, that men, with reason, to say nothing of conscience, will *buy* or *sell* such misery?

CHAPTER IX.

HOURS IN A MADHOUSE.

"Did you ever think that you would one day be insane?" said a friend of mine to me the other day.

"Never," replied I, "except when I am speculating upon insanity. Then I find my own mind so thoroughly enchanted with the subject itself, that I am tempted to think I am going crazy."

It may be a morbid sympathy, but there is no one class of suffering humanity to which my heart goes out with more intense longings for their relief, than to the inmates of a lunatic asylum. The poor have their sources of comfort in the soul: the sick find in the kindness that is shown them a balm for sorrows: the deaf, the dumb, the blind, have avenues through which bliss may flow

into their spirits; and there is sweetness in ministering to the wants and soothing the woes of the sons and daughters of distress, thus thrown upon our sympathies and appealing to us for aid. But who can minister to a mind diseased? How often is it true that the very attempt to give joy and peace to a disordered intellect is mistaken for a design to injure, and the language of kindness is construed into the wile of an enemy!

"Help me out of this horrid place," said a lady to me the other day in the hall of an asylum. She had been consigned to the prison of the heart by friends who loved her tenderly, and in years of love had rejoiced in the beams of her supernaturally bright and flashing eye. But disease had racked her brain, and she was crazed! She was taken from the bosom of a once happy family, any one of whom would have cheerfully gone to prison in her room, and all unconscious of the malady with which she was afflicted, she was shut within the walls of

the hospital for the insane. She had sense enough to know that she was among the mad, and when a stranger came in, she was reminded of the days when she was at liberty and home, and the thought of escape seized her.

"I am not deranged," she whispered, as she followed me down the corridor; "they brought me here because they thought I was; but you will help me out, and I shall be once more in that dear home."

I quieted her as well as I could, and turned away to get out of her sight. In one such case what a long tissue of associations springs to mind, and how the heartstrings are torn with sympathy! Here was the wife and the mother shut out from all the accustomed sources of happiness in which she had but recently found so much delight, and with all her deprivations added to the terrible thought that she was not mad. It would seem to be better that she should sink under the consciousness of the *truth*, than thus draw misery from the delusion

that she was an innocent convict among the condemned.

A venerable old lady was haunted with the belief that she was the mother of Washington, and that he and the great men of his time were, *in* spirit, her companions. This illusion had possessed her mind until she was no longer a suitable inmate of the family, and a place was found for her in the asylum. What a place was this for one in the decline of life; *inured* only to luxury, and revelling in fancy, as she had always in fact been only in the society of the elegant and refined. But here she was a queen-mother among her associates, disdaining familiar converse with any but the noble shades of the departed, who came thickening around her in the twilight, and paying homage at her court. With a dignified wave of her hand she bade them approach, and received them with majestic grace, as if royalty were her daily study. It was not so painful to contemplate her madness; and I have been deeply interested

in some of the views which Dr. Earle, of the Bloomingdale asylum, has advanced respecting the happiness of the insane. He thinks that, as a class of people, they are far from being the most miserable. He treats them, too, like *rational* beings; gives them lectures on philosophy and poetry; feeds their fancy for the beautiful, the curious, and the great; and thus finds the means of introducing into their minds some gleams of sunshine to cheer the darkness that must reign there with so little interruption. He was walking one day in front of the asylum, and a crazy woman sitting on the grass said:—

"One, two, buckle my shoe."

He went on with "three, four," and she matched it with a rhyme, and so on till the old ditty was exhausted, and he still pursued the numbers till she had made rhymes for the whole of them to the neighborhood of forty. Here was the effort of a philanthropist and a philosopher to awaken thought, connected thought, in the mind of a maniac.

Dr. Woodward, of Worcester, and Dr. Brigham, of Utica, have been very successful also in these efforts. In fact, there is no field of experiment and observation more interesting than the wilderness of ruined mind. We may traverse it with melancholy steps, but as there is pleasure in ministering to the heirs of sorrow, there is much to be reaped in these regions of blight and gloom.

Never shall I forget the image which I once saw through a grated door in the hospital for the insane on Blackwell's island. It was a child of not more than a dozen years old, who had been crazed by fright! And the picture of fear was drawn on its little face! It looked up with terror toward the grate, and as its wild eyes met mine, the little thing uttered a scream that thrilled along the fibres of the heart, and then buried its face under the rags that made its bed. This was a pauper child — a crazy pauper child, frightened out of its wits. It is dead, doubtless, before this; and who but would wish

that death would release it from agony for which life has no solace or cure!

Dr. Earle is fond of rousing his lunatic patients, or rather of tempting them to the exercise of faculties such as they have, that they may at once find pleasure and improvement in such pursuits.

But the most *rational* exercise for the insane is that of dancing. If it was impossible always for me to understand how sensible people could spend their time in dancing, there seemed to be something very appropriate in the amusement for crazy ones. It was therefore with great pleasure that I accepted an invitation to a ball at the —— asylum, the only ball I ever attended in my life. There were few guests besides the inmates of the establishment. To them the evening had been a source of high enjoyment in prospect, and their delight when at last the long-wished hour had come, was probably never exceeded by the pleasure of the most confirmed ball-goers among the sound-minded inhabitants of our city. The gentle-

man and lady lunatics had dressed themselves for the occasion in their very best; and now and then a peculiar fantastic style of head-gear discovered that the head beneath it was out of order; yet even these indications of insanity were not more numerous than would be seen in a company of equal number out of the asylum and in a ball-room. The music was by a mad-band! Think of that! Music hath charms even for the insane; and we bless God that there are chords in the soul that will vibrate harmoniously when reason is dethroned. And when the music struck up and the partners took their places on the floor, it was in the highest degree amusing to contemplate the gravity with which these lunatic dancers entered upon the mirthful business of the evening. Not being familiar with the art, I can not say how skilfully they went through the evolutions of the floor, nor whether their performances were in all respects as elegant as are seen at the city assemblies; but that there was ever a happier ball, or a more

profitable one than this, I doubt exceedingly. The amusement seemed commensurate with the capacities of the company; and if my fair readers who are fond of dancing will pardon me for making a clean breast, I will confess that I think dancing a very suitable amusement for the insane, and for them only. Let those who have no heads cultivate their heels.

Preaching to the insane is a pleasant and very useful exercise. I do not know how far the investigations of modern science have gone in search of the nature of insanity, but there is a delightful source of comfort to me in the fact that to nearly all the insane *the gospel* seems to be able to give consolation. They listen with interest: they feel the power of it on their hearts; they rejoice in its joyful sound; they want to hear it again.

I have been greatly interested in some cases of insanity furnished by Dr. Earle, and published in the American Journal, which is conducted by the officers of the

Utica asylum. The writer mentions several curious instances of delusion, only one or two of which I can copy.

"A young lady, while paying a visit to some of her friends, in a section of the country very remote from her home, became concerned for the welfare of her soul, and after much anxiety, tribulation, and suffering, was made happy by a revelation of the whole plan of salvation. This clearness of spiritual vision was afterward withdrawn for a time, but she was again made to rejoice at its return. On the night of this second revelation, she perceived distinctly delineated upon the wall of her room a figure like that of the Saviour, but without hands. On the following night, as she was lying down and earnestly engaged in prayer, she felt herself lifted from her bed, and a convulsive spasm shook her whole frame. This was repeated, and at length she was lifted up and borne away on a cloud, while surrounding harps filled the air with melody.

"Her voice, heretofore tremulous and

husky, now became strong and delightfully harmonious. About this time, as she was lying in bed, singing, she saw upon the ceiling a shadowy arm waving to and fro. Her happiness was ecstatic, and she continued to sing. She now lived in continual bliss. Every time she prayed she beheld a vision, generally a window, with clouds passing before it. She could pray with much greater facility than at any previous period of her life. One night, on retiring, she placed her watch at the head of the bed. She soon heard a noise, like the cracking of glass, and the watch stopped. A 'breathing' was heard at the head of the bed, and when it ceased the watch again commenced running. From this and from the former incidents which have been related, she became convinced that she was a supernatural being. She thought herself selected to be the bride of the Saviour. Her body was shaken with spasmodic tremour, and her limbs involuntarily assumed an attitude making the form of the cross.

While lying in this position, she felt as if wafted away upon a cloud; but at length a poinard was thrust into her side, withdrawn, and the stroke repeated. Her sleep was refreshing. In the morning she found the minute-hand of her watch split; and, upon placing the watch in her belt, it stopped. Looking through the window, she perceived the whole universe to be a scene of agitation and commotion. Although the sun shone brightly, rain was descending in torrents, and the wind blowing with the terrific force of a hurricane. The millenium, as she believed, was at hand! She threw herself upon the bed. The music of a marching army delighted her ears; and every time she breathed, the curtains of the windows waved.

"A few days after this she wrote letters to her friends, and on the following morning found some of the 'strong expressions' in them marked with figures like the characters of stenography. She told her acquaintance that she believed they were made by God.

The letters were now sealed, but not forwarded. The next day, a gentleman having called to whom she wished to read them, they opened without effort, as if they had not been sealed.

"She now began to visit the sick, believing that her touch would restore them, and bearing in mind the following texts of Scripture: Matt. xxi. 21; Mark xi. 23; Luke xvii. 6. She also spent hours in looking at the clouds, firmly convinced that she should be translated, like Enoch, to heaven. One day she preached an hour in the open air, expecting every moment to behold the reality of the scene delineated by West, in his picture of Death upon the Pale Horse. Much accustomed to going abroad, she had become tanned, and then perceived that her countenance bore a strong resemblance to that of a picture which she had seen of the virgin Mary, painted by an Italian artist. Not long afterward she beheld a halo of light encircling her head, such as is represented in the pictures of the Saviour.

"She became the centre of attraction; 'the observed of all observers.' The children of the neighbourhood, even the dogs, followed her, and she was compelled to lock the door of her chamber, to keep the chickens from coming in.

"While on board the steamboat, returning to her home, she believed that Christ was upon earth, and that the dead were awakened and rising from their graves. Among the passengers she recognised St. John the Divine, and two of the apostles. She imagined herself to be Mary Magdalene, and her father (who had been dead several years) Simon Peter. During the night preceding the day on which she debarked, she was awakened by the hissing of serpents, and the roaring and rushing of a waterfall. The reptiles were crawling over her, and encircling her in their coils. She thought that the general and final convulsion of creation had commenced, calmly closed her eyes, felt as if borne away upon a cloud, and, after the lapse of half an hour, during

which the sounds of the last throes and agony of expiring nature were continued, an angel's seal was pressed upon her forehead. By this signet she would be recognised among the heavenly host.

"At one place where the boat touched, she saw several of her former acquaintances, who had risen from the dead. Among the crowd she observed a large and apparently most powerful man, 'wearing a blue navy shirt, and a light cap.' This, she believed, was Christ.

"She left the boat at a large town, and stopped at a hotel. At the supper-table, and on the following morning, at breakfast, were three men, one of them very similar in appearance to her deceased father. On the latter occasion, as she looked at the person last mentioned, his eyeballs glared like fire, and she became convinced that he was God, and his companions the Son and the Holy Ghost. They were the true Trinity.

"Proceeding in another boat toward home, she saw, upon the surface of the

river, the reflection of a large army in heaven, many of the horsemen being clad in mail, and leaning forward upon the necks of their chargers. For several days in succession she felt rain descending from heaven upon her face. Once as she looked upward it did not descend. She prayed fervently, again looked up, and her prayer was answered by the falling rain.

"Among the ornaments worn by her, were a valuable ring, a pencil-case, and a watch, all of gold, and gifts of her deceased father. Upon being asked by a clergyman, who was a fellow-passenger, if she believed it proper to wear jewels, she was immediately seized with compunction for her transgressions in this respect. Carved upon the watch there was a serpent, whose eye was represented by an emerald. She looked upon it, and the eye glared at her with a light so fearful, so hideous, and so brilliant, that she was unable to withstand its power. Determined to sever the last link by which she was bound to earth, she seized the ring,

the pencil-case, and the watch, and threw them overboard into the river."

Those who are interested in the statistics of insanity, and those who are fond of pursuing inquiries into the fields which the subject opens, will discern much to gratify their curiosity in the report of the managers of the New York State Lunatic Asylum, made to the legislature in January last. There have been 553 patients in that asylum during the year, and the treatment has been so successful, that, of the 268 discharged, all but 34 were either cured or improved, and more than one half were pronounced entirely recovered. Of the 285 remaining at the end of the year, there were 143 men and 142 women, a singular instance of equality in the number from the sexes. Of the persons in the asylum the past year, 4 were clergymen; 11 were lawyers; 18 were teachers; 6 were boys, and 27 girls, in school; 344 were females employed in housework, that is, I suppose, females accustomed to attend to their own

domestic concerns. It is a curious fact, that at this institution more married persons than single ones are received, while the reverse is true of almost all other lunatic asylums.

The causes of insanity are worthy of special attention. One man is set down as made crazy by "preaching sixteen days and nights;" and the only wonder is, that it did not make the people crazy too. Religious anxiety is assigned as the cause in 102 cases! Millerism in 19 cases, and that, too, in 1845, two years after Millerism had expired by its own arithmetic. In a large number of cases the disease is hereditary —a terrible entailment; and when the instances are so numerous of its transmission, it may well suggest the high importance of precautionary measures in the cases of those who have any reason to anticipate the inheritance. Twelve women are in the asylum by the "abuse of husbands;" thirteen men, and only five women, from "disappointment in love."

I would extend this compilation much further, but for the fear that others will not find the same interest in the study that I do. And I can not more appropriately bring this article to a close than by quoting from Dr. Earle, to whose labors I have already referred; whose *writing* discovers the scholar as readily as his success demonstrates his ability and knowledge in his peculiar profession. Speaking of insanity, and the means of its cure, he says:—

"No palliation, no specious argument, no artificial gloss, can divest it of its deformity, or conceal its melancholy horrors. Beneath its sway reason is deprived of her throne, and alienated from her empire; the most glorious attribute of man is, for the time, destroyed; the distinctive characteristic of our race is obliterated, and he who was 'exalted to the heavens,' is brought down to the earth. Yet often, in its most protracted forms, when years, both many and long, have rolled away beneath its influence, when the sands in the glass of time are near-

ly spent, and the flame of life is flickering toward extinction, the mind rises superior to the power which has crushed it, and, like the sun at the close of a clouded day, shines forth in the brightness and beauty of its primeval lustre. 'So blessings brighten ere they take their flight.' And when this resumption of the throne of reason does not occur in life, it is a blessed consolation of the Christian's faith, that the trammels of earth can not be borne beyond the grave; that, when the 'silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl is broken,' all the dross that dimmed and tarnished the lustre of the soul shall be severed from that spiritual essence, and it shall stand, as stand the souls of those more fortunate in their temporal existence, before a tribunal of unerring justice, in the realm where Love, and Life, and Light, a glorious triune, eternal as the Power from which they sprang, shall obliterate the shadowed past, in the effulgence and beatitude of the present."

CHAPTER X.

THE WOMAN WHO WANTED TO BE TURNED!

In the midst of those pleasures that cluster thick about the fireside, I was forgetting the outer world, when the door-bell rang, and presently the servant announced that a woman wished to see me. I stepped into the hall, and there was standing in the door a pretty woman of perhaps five-and-twenty years, who said to me, in a brogue that left no doubt of her being from the Emerald isle:—

"Are you the *praist?*"

I told her I was a minister, and asked if I could be of any service to her. She looked at me with great seriousness, and said:—

"I want to be turned."

"What did you say?" said I, supposing I must have misunderstood her.

"I want to be turned," said she again, with the same fixed countenance, but with a still more imploring tone.

I was considerably puzzled; for, in the variety of applications which are made to me here in the city, this was the first time that I had ever been called on for such a purpose, and I looked at her with such perplexity, that she evidently saw I had not comprehended her meaning. I said to her:—

"My good woman, I should be glad to help you, if it were in my power; but really, I do not exactly know what you would have."

She looked up with still deeper interest than before, and exclaimed:—

"And I'm a catholic, and I want to be turned into a protestant, and they told me you were *good at turning people*, and so I thought I would come and see if you wouldn't just be so good as to please to *turn* me."

It struck me at first that it could hardly

be true, that anybody should send a woman to me on such an errand, for there were certainly very many around me much better able to turn catholics into protestants than I am; but there was *that* in the woman's air and tone that put all idea of imposition out of the question; and she stood before me a poor Roman catholic, asking to be put in the way of knowing the truth and finding eternal life. I, therefore, inquired into her circumstances, her means of instruction, the motives that led to her present step; and she told me, with great simplicity, that her husband was a protestant, who read his bible daily, but she had "fought" him, and tried to stop him, for she had been taught that they must not read the Bible; but he seemed to be very happy, while she was very miserable, and she thought he was in the right way and she was in the wrong. She had heard him read some in the Bible, but she had no learning, and could not understand much; but he knew all about it, and had tried to explain it to her. And she

thought if she should be a protestant, like her husband, they would take a great deal more comfort, and so she begged me to take pity on her, and turn her into a protestant, and she would never be a catholic any more, at all, at all.

I then attempted to converse with her on some of the simplest truths of religion, the way of salvation by the merits of the Saviour, and the need of repentance and faith; but she had no conception of the existence, much less of the nature, of the plainest doctrines of the gospel. Her ignorance was total and frightful. It seemed incredible that a person could live in a Christian land and know so little of religion. After conversing with her freely, and setting before her the difference in doctrine between Roman catholics and protestants, I asked her:—

"Do you now sincerely renounce the errors of the Roman catholic religion, and promise never to go after them again so long as you live?"

"And that's what I do, with all my heart."

"Now," said I, "go home and tell your husband that you have become a protestant, and do you go to church with him, and go to the minister who preaches to him, and tell him what you have done."

"But," said she, "can't you give me a little bit of a line, just to show them all about it. Do give it me."

I went back into the house, and taking a large book, I wrote on the blank leaf a formal renunciation of popery, and, having read it to her, asked her to sign it. She did so, making her mark, after I had written her name. I then made out a regular certificate of the fact, that she had appeared before me, and abjured the pope of Rome, the devil, and all their works, and put it into her hands. She expressed her gratitude in simple words, and as she turned to go away she looked back, and said :—

"And I'll come next week, and CONFESS."

"Oh, no," I said to her; "confess to

God. We don't confess to the priest in our church."

"But I must confess my sins; I want to come once a week and confess to you."

"Not a bit of it, my dear woman; I will never let you do any such thing at all. You must pray to God for the sake of Jesus Christ; he has power to forgive sins, and no one else. All the priests in the world can do you no good, unless you repent and cry unto God."

So she went her way, declaring that she should come again.

I have told this story as one of the many incidents of life in the city; but more to show the deep degradation of the poor Irish whom Providence has thrown at our very doors. What an awful load of guilt must that priesthood incur, that crushes the souls of its people under ignorance so rayless and hopeless! I suppose a Roman catholic may, like Fenelon, find saving truth in the midst of the errors of that system; but how few Fenelons, how few *Christians*, can you find in the bosom of antichrist!

CHAPTER XI.

CRIME IN THE CITY.

READER, you have no heart, perhaps, for a chapter of crime. Shall we then pass the subject and consider another and pleasanter? Just as you please, but to describe this city and say nothing of its vices, would be to write a history of the American revolution and say nothing of Benedict Arnold, because his was a very unpleasant chapter in *that* same history.

I had great difficulty in arriving at the truth with respect to the pauperism of the city. I have greater in making an approach toward the truth in reference to its vice. Some poverty loves to show itself—all poverty is more likely to be relieved by being known. Vice hides itself; the only plant that grows and loves to grow in the

dark. How shall we get at it, and take its gauge. I can tell how many criminal trials there have been in this city within the last year, and in any year of many past; but there have not been half as many as there ought to have been. I could tell you how many have been sent to stateprison, but I have not a doubt there are thousands now at large who ought to be with them, or in the places of some of them. Then there is vice here that the law winks at, or never meddles with; festering vice; worse than festering, cancerous on the vitals of society; preying upon it ravenously, yet never disturbed; and then there is vice here which the law can not reach, above law and never to be reclaimed till men, one by one, are made better by the power of God's grace and truth. For some of this vice the law has no remedy; not even a piece of sticking plaster. It riots and rots here in the face of men, it "smells to heaven," and WHO CARES?

I have been amazed to see how indifferent

we are to crime in the city, how soon we forget, and sometimes how willing we are to spread a thick covering over it and "make believe" that it is all right. You recollect that sometime ago a man was shot dead in Leonard street near Broadway just in the edge of evening. This was three years ago. I saw the blood of the murdered man yet fresh on the white snow. Hundreds of people must have been passing, and it would seem impossible that the deed could be done without detection. Well, there was a great hue and cry raised about it. They said a woman shot him, and *one* was arrested and examined, and nothing being proved against her she was discharged, and there was an end of the matter. The very fact is almost forgotten, and WHO CARES?

I should like to tell you of the private history of another shooting affair that took place in our streets some time ago, but perhaps I had better not. If I should tell you that one *gentleman* seduced a young lady

under promise of marriage, and a friend of his seduced her away from him, and the first seducer spit in the face of the second, and the second shot the first, it would give a virtuous country gentleman such an idea of our city morals as I should be ashamed of, and therefore I will tell you nothing about it. Yet these are facts, and only the outside facts of a tale of misery and damnable villany that perfectly vindicates the righteous justice of hell-fire, if for no other purpose than to burn eternally one single class of sinners whom God suffers to walk on his footstool and pollute his ear, for some purpose inscrutable but doubtless wise. "Wherefore do the wicked live?"

"THE EGYPTIAN TOMBS."—Striking up Centre street northeast from the city-hall, you soon come to an immensely broad and dismally low building, in the Egyptian style of architecture, something like a decapitated pyramid, spreading from Leonard to Franklin and from Centre back to Elm street, as gloomy in its aspect as if Melancholy had

conceived the plan and Despair built it for her own amusement. I have a volume in which it is described as "a unique and *beautiful* building;" *unique* it certainly is, being in the likeness of nothing that was, is, or will be; but the *beauty* of it must be with that of some other things and folks called handsome, but which to my poor vision was always invisible. It stands in a horrid part of the city, where the ground is low, and, with or without reason, it has been rumored that on account of the dampness it is not a suitable place even for villains. I know the cells are cold, for I have been there, but of this more anon. It is 200 feet wide, and 250 feet long; the front or main building being occupied for the various and appropriate purposes of "HALLS OF JUSTICE," and the outer portion is a lofty wall surrounding the building containing 225 cells for prisoners. This is called the "house of detention," and here are confined those who are awaiting their trial, those under sentence of death, and others who are sentenced for

a period too short to render their confinement necessary in the penitentiary or state-prison.

In the main building, at the right hand of the area to which you ascend from the street by a flight of steps, is the police-office. You must not fail to drop in, if for a moment only, to see "Old Hays," of whom you have heard ever since you were a boy. He is high constable yet, a Jew, regularly attends Dr. M'Elroy's (presbyterian) congregation, and his eye and his history are worth the study of a philosopher. Cool, cunning, and courageous, he has been the terror of rogues in New York for half a century. It is wonderful with what sagacity the officers of our city police *sometimes* ferret out criminals and bring them to justice. I say sometimes, and at others they seem to draw a net like those they use in Long Island sound to catch moss bunkers for manure. It is made for little fish only, and sometimes when hauling in they find that a shark is enclosed, and they are afraid to close in upon him lest he

should let himself out without permission and take all "the catch" with him. So big rogues are often suffered to run at large, while the small fry are caught in shoals. A few days ago a nest of counterfeiters was neatly broken up. Two young men were known to go to a room in a boarding-house in Prince street, at a certain hour every day and there to remain in silence for some hours. Their motions were watched with more vigilance than we imagine to be customary in a free country, until the police-officers walked through the door rather suddenly, and found the gentlemen very industriously pursuing their business of counterfeiting; their tools, stock in trade, &c., were seized, and they were provided with lodgings in the "Tombs," whence they will soon be transferred to a country residence on the Hudson, near Sing-Sing.

This police-office is a schoolhouse where a thinking man will learn strange lessons of life in New York. I have now and then walked in and leaned against the bar, while

the *victims* have one after another been brought up, examined, committed, &c., with such rapidity of execution that it seemed dangerous to stay in that neighbourhood. Last week, as I was passing, I saw a man, *the worse for liquor*, amusing the bystanders with his drunken humour. Presently two constables marched him into the police-office, and placed him on a bench; the justice asked him his name, and with mock gravity the fellow spelled it for him, letter by letter; the justice filled out a blank paper of the size of your hand, and in five minutes from the time he was dancing in the street, he was meditating in the "Tombs."

CHAPTER XII.

VISIT TO A PIRATE'S CELL.

A FEW months ago, I visited the Egyptian sepulchre of a prison, before described. The watch department is about as gloomy a spot as can be found anywhere above ground; and the quarters where night-stragglers and rowdies are lodged, are sufficiently forbidding to evil-doers, one would think, to render them very unpopular. It is therefore a matter of wonder that so many find accommodations there at night, and, not satisfied, come again. The prison is a long building, with four tiers of cells, with a gallery running round the prison, in which the inmates are allowed to walk occasionally. As I entered, I saw a young man sitting up in the second tier, reading a

newspaper; he rose at once from his seat, stepped into the cell, and shut the door. The keeper said it was BABE, the pirate. You have heard of him. He was convicted of piracy and murder on board the Lavinia some time ago, and had been sentenced to death, and twice respited by the president of the United States, in consequence of his declaration that he could produce a witness to establish his innocence. But the witness has never made his appearance. It has been stated in some of the papers, that he has respectable relatives living in this city, who are not aware of his existence, and should I mention the name of the man whose son he was *said* to be, you would drop the book, and start to your feet. I walked by the cell several times; he kept the door closed, and evidently was determined not to be gazed at. But I could not come away without an effort at least to have some conversation with one thus shut out from the world, and doomed to die. Perhaps, thought I, he may be willing to listen

to the voice of one who has no other errand to his cell than to do him good; perhaps I may reach his heart. At any rate I will try. I said to the keeper:—

"Will you go to Babe's cell, and tell him that a young clergyman would be pleased to converse with him a few moments?"

The keeper returned with word that "Babe would be very happy to see me."

I passed through the low portal, and down a single step; he swung the iron door back to its place, and I was alone with the pirate in his cell.

A strange feeling crept over me for a moment. I had often stood at the grate of the doors in the stateprison, and talked with criminals, but this being closeted with a pirate was new to me, and it took an instant to recover. I shook hands with the prisoner, as he rose from his bunk behind the door, and very pleasantly expressed his pleasure in seeing me *there*. As I took off my hat, he begged me to keep it on, as the

cell was cool, and I might take cold; and taking the only chair his narrow quarters would admit, I sat down in front of him, and entered at once into familiar conversation with the man whose name had been associated in my mind with a loathsome monster of depravity and blood. Before me was sitting a young man of about twenty-two, tall, well-formed, with a bright eye and intelligent face, fluent of speech, and with a brogue indicative of foreign birth, having the marks of one who had not been accustomed to hard fare all his days; and as I looked on him—pardon me for the weakness—my heart went out after him, and I wanted to win him back to virtue and to peace. I said to him:—

"My dear sir, it is no motive of idle curiosity that has brought me here. I feel a deep interest in your welfare, and would speak with you concerning your precious soul."

"I am glad to see you," he said, and I continued:—

"When you look forward to another world, what are your prospects, and what views do you entertain as to your future state?"

"My views," said he, with great promptness, and an air of coolness that chilled me, "my views, I suppose, are very much the same as yours, or those of any other man."

"But," said I, "there is a great diversity of sentiment among men as to their future state. Do you feel at peace with God, and prepared to meet him in judgment?"

"My mind is as much at ease as that of any other man in the city of New York," he replied, with firmness and energy; and then raising his arms and extending his clenched fists toward me, he added: "But do you suppose I can be at peace, when a set of bloodhounds are pursuing me, determined to take my life. I am as innocent of the crime for which I am shut up here and sentenced to be hanged, as you are, but"—

And then he went on with protestations of innocence and denunciations of his ene-

mies, till he became furious in his gesticulations, brandishing his arms, as if he would love to have vengeance. I tried to calm him.

"Supposing you are innocent of *this* crime—and I am not here to ask or hear anything about that—does not your past life afford the most abundant occasion for repentance of sin, and do you not see the need of finding forgiveness before you can be at peace with your Maker?"

He admitted this truth, and I went on to set before him, in direct terms, the nature of sin, and the way of life through Jesus Christ. He listened with attention, but as soon as I gave him a chance to reply he fell into his former strain. And then he alluded, of his own accord, to his friends.

"I have respectable relatives living in this city; but they do not know that I am here, and should not, if I were to die to-morrow."

"But do you not wrong yourself by thus

concealing your name from your friends, who might be of service to you?"

"I know I do wrong; but if I am to be hanged, my friends shall never have the disgrace of it."

I spent some fifteen or twenty minutes in this conversation; and, after commending him earnestly to the Saviour, and begging him to turn his thoughts away from others, and seek to be reconciled to God, I shook hands with him, and receiving his repeated thanks for my visit, I left him.

Since my visit to his cell, this youth has been pardoned by the president of the United States, and is now abroad on the wide world.

CHAPTER XIII.

STATISTICS OF VICE, AND REFLECTIONS THEREON.

Of the causes of *crime* in this city, there are two worthy of distinct mention — intemperance and licentiousness. I call them *causes* of crime, yet why are they not written CRIMES in the law-books, and punished as such? I have asked a question hard to be answered, but which I mean to answer before I drop the subject.

To make laws to punish theft and murder, while intemperance and licentiousness are licensed or winked at by law, is about as rational political economy as it would be for the state to employ the Eccolabeion or egg-hatching machine, and set it at work, with three thousand more ovens of the same sort, to hatch rattlesnakes, which should be permitted to escape into the streets, and *then*

offer a reward for their destruction. The government first sits upon the nest of criminal eggs, and when the whole swarm has been hatched into life and motion, it sends its agents to catch a few of them, and now and then it hangs one of its own victims. Does this sound like the anti-government preaching of the present day? Quite the reverse. Because I love a strong government, that shall protect society, begin at the beginning of things, and lay its hand on the springs of crime, I set this error in this new and odious light. Think of the startling fact, that the mayor and corporation of the city of New York have licensed 3,116 persons to sell ardent spirits in the last year, and probably as many more sell without license, and the government pays no attention to the evil! And when the natural result of this traffic appears in the pauperism and crime of the city, so fearful that the truth is not believed when you tell it, then the common council talk of a new police system, and more vigilance, and all that, as if they

were really in earnest, to guard the morals, and property, and lives, of those who pay the taxes! This is the "penny-wise and pound-foolish" policy which all government exhibits in our country, and I doubt not that the government of the city of New York is as wise, pure, and efficient, as any other.

So of the licentiousness of the city. Of all anomalies in legislation, the indifference of government and of society to this evil is the strangest. Pauperism runs back to intemperance as its source; but I have not a doubt that with the crimes of this city, punishable by law, the vice of licentiousness is a far more fruitful source than you imagine. To obtain the means of sinful indulgence, the young are tempted continually to crime; indulgence sears the conscience, and steals the sensibilities of the soul more rapidly and fatally than any other vice, and the avenues to this vice are so many, alluring, and deceitful, that he would be the reformer of the age, and worthy of a monument of Parian marble, who shall devise a remedy to arrest

the evil. But this parent of vice is tolerated in our city, licensed in others, and treated in all as a necessary sore, to be kept running on the body of society.

The police-office is open before daylight every morning, when a magistrate is present to dispose of prisoners arrested during the night; and this court is in session constantly until sunset. There are two offices, the upper and lower. In 1842, there were committed to the city prison, from the lower office alone, 9,530 persons; and the clerk told me, the other day, that last year there were about 14,000.

A large proportion of these commitments are *vagrants*—a term that includes drunkards and harlots, who are seized and committed without much ceremony.

Look at the comparative crime of the city for the five years ending in 1844, taking only the convictions in the oyer and terminer, the general, and the special sessions: 1840, 1,099; 1841, 1,355; 1842, 1,385; 1843, 1,675; 1844, 1447.

You see a regular increase until the last, when there is a falling off; but in this time the population has been increasing rapidly. The comparison is therefore gratifying and encouraging, for we have no reason to believe that the administration of justice has been less efficient the last year than before.

"LICENTIOUSNESS."—Aldermen Tillou and Woodhull presented to the board of aldermen, in 1844, a report in relation to the police of the city, in which they bring to view the details of vice that ought to be known to the public, but which, being buried in "*public* documents," are never read.

When it was proved to the world, by figures that do not lie, that one out of every seven certainly, and perhaps one out of every five persons in the city, receives aid at the hand of charity every year, the fact was denounced as a libel on the city, and I was waited on by several gentlemen with a request to re-examine the subject. I did, and made the matter worse. I shall, therefore, not say, that one out of every seven females

in the city over the age of sixteen and under thirty-six is an abandoned woman; for, should I say so, nobody would believe it, and I should be read out of society. But I will give you the facts in the case, and you must draw the inferences. The committee of the board of aldermen estimate, from actual examination of certain parts of the city, that there are *ten thousand* of these bad women residing among us. The average life of those thus given up to vice is not more than ten or fifteen years. In a population of 350,000 persons, there are about 70,000 females over the age of sixteen and under thirty-six, and within these ages may be reckoned nearly all those of whom we are speaking. Now take the number 70,000, divide it by 10,000, and you shall find the proportion of the vicious to the virtuous to be *one in seven!!!* It does seem to me that the aldermen must be mistaken. But I am serving them as others serve me, when I thus call in question the results of their examination, and I

will let it stand for others to correct, if they can.

This vast multitude of the abandoned find support, not in the population of our city alone, but by preying on the passions of the tens of thousands of strangers who are always with us, and who here seek those criminal indulgences which they can not find at home. Here, too, the victims of vice in the country flee for a shelter from the scorn of the world, and now seek to live upon that which has been their ruin. It has been shown by actual inquiry, that these sinks of iniquity are supplied by importations from the country, where the air of heaven is pure, but where sin reigns as here.

You will like to know how this state of things compares with other cities. I have statistics of some places in Great Britain, and we do not care to compare ourselves with continental Europe. Their pre-eminency in vice is not to be called in question. But look at England. Supposing that there are 400 brothels in the city of New York, our

place in the scale will be learned from the following table, which I have prepared, taking the population of New York from the last census :—

	Population.	Brothels.
New York.....	313,000,.....	400,
Liverpool.....	223,000,.....	770,
Manchester.....	380,000,.....	308,
Birmingham.....	197,000,.....	797,
London.....	1,900,000,.....	5,000.

I have returns from other cities, but these are enough. You will readily perceive that there is no great difference between us and our trans-Atlantic sisters, on the score of morals. *Our* report is better than some, and worse than others. But I believe we are better in one particular. I never heard that any bishop in our country, or clergyman of any name, derived any part of his living from the rent of brothels. But it is a well-known fact, having been exposed in the house of lords, that the rent of a large number of brothels flows into the coffers of one of the bishops; and not long since was seen the *Rev.* J. Holmes figuring at the

Marylebone police-office, as the landlord of a furnished brothel, and preferring a charge against his tenant for having stolen *three looking-glasses!* These are not solitary cases. Not long since, another clergyman of the church of England being reproached with the ownership of six of these houses, replied: "Why blame me; my masters have hundreds." Whether legal restraints can be imposed, so as materially to check the evil, seems to be a question which legislators usually answer in the negative. But that our laws are radically defective on the whole subject I have not a doubt, and I wish that the minds of those who make and administer our laws might be put right.

It is said that if severe enactments are made against the sale of ardent spirits and also against violations of the seventh commandment, it will be impossible to enforce them; that the appetites and passions of men will be gratified, in spite of law, and public opinion will never sustain the magistrate in the execution of a law that inflicts a

heavy penalty upon offences which are committed by the free will of both parties concerned. Thus the man who buys and the man who sells ardent spirits, consent to the transaction, and why should the seller be punished? So of the seducer. But this reasoning goes upon two false positions: 1, that these are the only parties; and, 2, that the consent of the victim absolves from guilt. Society has an interest in this matter; and the good of the whole number should be looked at in law-making. Nor is it true that a member of society has a right to injure himself to the injury of his neighbors: as he does when he becomes a drunkard and a seducer. There are others who suffer besides the victim of the rum-seller and the seducer; and these *others* have rights which the law should protect. And if a house is kept open in this city for the sale of ardent spirits to be drunk as a beverage, if a house is kept open in which the temptations to licentiousness are exposed for sale, why, in the name of everlasting

right, does not the law make such houses *nuisances*, to be exterminated from the heart of society. It licenses the one class and lets the other alone! If a miserable hole in Orange street, becomes so offensive that the peace of the city requires its purgation, the old hag who keeps it will be snaked to the police-office, and tried for "keeping a disorderly house." But hundreds of houses close by the houses of our magistrates spread their allurements before the eyes of our youth, and tempt them into the vortex of hell, and the shield of law protects the portal, though all that enter, enter to be damned.

It is said that if these vices are made penal, they will still be practised. So there will be thieves and murderers, in spite of law. But surely no sane man will be for having no laws against theft and murder. We ought to have laws built, as God's laws are, on the right and the wrong of things, with penalties proportioned to the nature and consequences of crime; instead of laws

that are based confessedly on the prejudices and ignorance and depravity of those who hate all laws because they interfere with their lusts.

A great many people seem to think that the devil has the majority on his side, and *therefore* there is no use in trying to vote him and his down. But God's side is the strongest, and even in this country where governing is done by voting, if the friends of God and virtue were half as wise in their generation as the devil's people in theirs, the right would prevail. There are hundreds and thousands of people in this city who expect to go to heaven, who never give themselves any trouble about the vices of the times, leaving laws and politics, and consequently the morals of the people, to take care of themselves; when they hear of a horrid crime in the streets or in a den of shame, they groan heavily, but as to moving in a work of reform, to secure better law-makers and better laws, or even to secure the triumph of a moral reformation, so

as to make public sentiment what it might be, they never dream of such a thing, not they! The friends of virtue should awake to the moral dangers that lurk and riot and reign in this city; they should strive together to reclaim the vicious, to restrain the erring, to strengthen the weak, to dam up the currents of evil, exterminate the seeds of vice, expel or imprison the wretches who make their bread by tempting to perdition our sons and daughters, and gloat, like harpies, over the blasted hopes and crushed hearts of their victims. There are thousands of houses in this city, over whose door might be written, as it is written over one of the doors of the theatres — "TO THE PIT." Edmund Burke said, in reference to the vices of London, that were it not for the lofty spires of their churches, which serve to conduct away the lightning of heaven, God's fire would long ago have consumed the city; and who that knows the abominations of ours, but trembles when he thinks that the Holy One is Almighty!

CHAPTER XIV.

A NOCTURNAL SUBTERRANEAN EXCURSION.

All of the city is not above ground. There are multitudes who live and move and have their being in depths that sunlight seldom permeates, and where the footstep of virtue as seldom breaks upon the ceaseless career of dark and loathsome sin. When Dickens visited this country he made an exploring tour through one of these haunts of infamy and vice; and in the strong colours with which he paints, he has given us a horrid picture of what he saw. But he is altogether better at fancy than fact, and when we read his descriptions of things real, we are all the while inclined to believe that he is romancing; and his truthful portraits are passed by as amusing caricatures. Yet ever since we read his narrative of an "un-

derground ball," in a place that now bears his name, an appropriate memorial of his sojourn among us, being called "Dickens' Hole," there has been much curiosity awakened to know how much truth there was in his story, though there was nothing very inviting in the prospect of following in his footsteps through the lowest and darkest dens of pollution on the continent of America! Of course you would never expect me to make a personal investigation of such localities, but a few nights ago a friend of mine, accompanied by a friend of his, and under the escort of a well-known police-officer, a terror to the sons and daughters of crime, and a frequent visiter in their domains, made the tour of the regions to which I have referred, and I propose to give you, very briefly, an account of *some* things they saw. One of the parties related to me the incidents of the night which I will transfer to this canvass in my own way.

It was midnight. We had made an appointment with an officer of the city police,

one of the oldest and truest of that department, to meet us at the —— house, and we were all ready. The neighbourhood we proposed to visit, was unsafe for any man to enter in the night unless well protected, and we had therefore taken such precautions as the first law of nature dictates in such cases. Turning down L—— to O—— street, we came to a large white-washed door, at which the officer tapped, as if giving a signal to be understood within. The door was cautiously opened, and we stood enveloped in darkness, but the sound of distant music broke upon our ears. We groped our way to a flight of stairs *down* which we marched, the officer being at the head; till we came to another door guarded by a porter, who proved to be the presiding genius of the establishment. He knew the officer at a glance, and was as complaisant as if a new customer had come; and on being informed that we were on a pleasure excursion through his dominions, he threw open his infernal ball-

room door, and there, as sure as life, was a sight such as the disordered brain of a madman might conjure, but which we had never ventured to believe was one of many nightly similar scenes in this Christian city. A motley multitude of men and women, yellow and white, black and dingy, old and young, ugly and —— no not handsome; God forbid that beauty should ever bloom in such a hotbed as this—but there they were, a set of male and female Bacchanals dancing to the tambourine and fiddle; giggling and laughing in a style peculiar to the remote descendants of Ham, and making "night hideous" with their lascivious orgies. Talk of the degradation of the heathen; of savage pow-wows, and pagan carnivals; and stir up sympathy for the slaves of sin in the depths of Africa or Asia. Here we were within a stone's throw of the city-hall, in the centre of the first city in the most Christian country on the earth, and here was a sight to make the heart sicken and bleed. On one side of the room was a bar, tended

by a rascally-looking wretch who dealt out the liquors to the frequent calls of his customers, and as the drinking and fiddling went on, the fury of the company waxed fiercer, until the scene was as unreal and bewildering as if we had been suddenly ushered into the revelling halls of the prince of darkness.

Wandering through this horrid group was a young man whom we recognised as of a *respectable* family, but his bloated face and bloody eyes, and the loose familiarity with which he addressed the company, showed that he was at home among them, and was already near the nadir point of his downward career. We thought of the mother that gave him birth, and whose heart would be wrung with agony at the ruin of her son, were she not one of the many mothers in the ranks of fashion and pride, perhaps this moment flaunting at a more splendid ball, yielding to the voluptuous blandishments of elegant vice, and listening to the flattering tongue that will lure her to

meet her lost boy at the door of a lower hell.

"That gaudy girl," said the officer, "decked with so much finery, makes it her profession to decoy men into houses kept for the purpose, and there she robs them. Many men from the country, prompted by curiosity, follow such persons as you see her to be, and before they are aware of their danger, they are in a snare from which escape is impossible. Resistance is useless, and to complain to the police is attended with an exposure worse than the loss of money. In fact, the robbery of their victims is the *chief* pursuit of the class of women of whom that girl is one of the queens."

But we were glad to emerge from this den, and breathe again the pure air of heaven. A bright full moon poured on us a flood of light as we gained the upper regions, and what a contrast to the murky atmosphere from which we had just escaped! It was a beautiful night! The mild moon sailed

in glory over us, and the stars "whose PURITY and DISTANCE make them FAIR," danced like celestial virgins "in the blue ethereal sky," and we could scarcely believe that, under such a canopy, there could be such scenes as we had just left. Alas for sinners! They do love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. And this is their condemnation—they love it, and have it, now and eternally.

As we stood on the pavement, arrested by the loveliness of the upper world, a night officer passed us, dragging a woman to the watch-house; another woman followed, declaring she would go with her, and a man was holding the second to pull her back. Here was a scene. Sudden and fearful, but it had its moral. There was devotion in the woman who would follow her friend to the prison; and she did follow her, in spite of the force and entreaties of her husband. In this extremity of vice there was such friendship as we rarely meet, and we thought it proved that all was not lost in the miserable

woman ; perhaps there was a chord in her heart that might yet be touched, and by which she might be led back to virtue. O ! for more of the spirit of the friend of publicans and sinners ! O ! for men with the love for the lost that burned in the bosom of Jesus, to go down into these realms of undisturbed depravity, and with the gentle power of the gospel undertake the recovery of some, at least, of these for whose souls no man cares.

Our guide next led us through a dark defile, into a back yard, and up a rickety stairway into a shed, the door of which was not opened, until a thundering blow informed the inmates that it would be off the hinges in a moment. The floor was covered with forms that were meant for the human race, but sadly changed from the forms that God had given them. The fragrance was peculiar and excessive, and we made our observations few and short, hastening to another and another apartment of the same building, the floors of the various rooms being as

thickly covered with bodies as a field of battle could be with the slain; and close by was another house in which from five to six hundred persons sleep every night, lying on the floor, with a bit of old carpet or nothing at all over them, but the rags they carry through the day. These houses accommodate lodgers for six cents and some for three cents, *in advance*, a night; their customers being beggars and thieves, who manage to pick up enough in the course of the day and the first part of the night to pay for shelter for the rest.

We stopped at the window of a rumshop and looked in at a gang of gallowsbirds, who were carousing. The officer knew them, and mentioned their names, as they had all been in his clutches before, and doubtless would be again. One was a noted villain of the Chichester gang, and several of them illustrious in the calendar of the Tombs, as burglars and rioters. It is unsafe for any man to go through this part of the city in the night; for, in spite of the diligence of

watchmen, it sometimes happens that men are knocked down and robbed in the streets. We were well protected. Our guide was well known, and it was amusing to observe the deference with which he was treated; the black wretches asking after his health, and that of his family, as if he were a particular friend, and not a man whom they would be glad to put out of the way, so effectually as not to be troubled with his society again.

But these details are growing tedious, and I will bring them to a close. Perhaps I have made a mistake in dwelling on these features of life in the city. But these are sketches drawn from the life, and the half has not been told. My motive is a good one. I wish to impress those who read, with the power of the truth, that there is beneath this city a mass of moral putrefaction, sufficient to bring out the worst plagues in the store of an offended God. There are depths of depravity into which quicklime

should be thrown as a disinfecting agency, if there can not be poured in any streams to purify and heal. This picture ought to compel support, and greatly augmented support, for CITY MISSIONS, and every other instrumentality that will carry the gospel to those who will never come after it. We must not leave these dens of unclean beasts without an effort to save some of their miserable inmates. Let us do all we can to save others from getting into them. Preach the gospel in the pulpit, and in the highways, and block up the road to perdition, if you can; but if there is an arm of mercy to reach these guilty wretches, whirling in the very throat of the maelstrom, oh, for Christ's sake, let it be stretched to save.

Ministers of God! preach Christ in your country churches, and mingle your songs of praise with the winds that sigh among the tree-tops of your temples not made with hands. God bless you in your joyful work,

as those ready to perish will. But think of the sinners of this city, murdering their souls under the shadow of sanctuaries, and diving headlong into hell from the gates of heaven.

CHAPTER XV.

MILK IN THE METROPOLIS.

Some weeks ago, a friend invited me to make an excursion into the upper part of the city to see a milk-factory. I had read Hartley's articles about city milk, and had heard of chalk and water and other nostrums, not forgetting the receipt for which a patent ought to be taken out:—

To make milk.

Take	*aq. font.*	87 parts.
"	*lac. bov.*	10 "
"	*cal. mag.*	3 "
	Total	100 "

This mixture makes a very fair article, at least it has no injurious ingredients, if the articles are obtained pure; and since the

Croton aqueduct is completed, the chief ingredient is easily procured. But my friend assured me, that he could introduce me more deeply into the mysteries of the trade, and with this view I accompanied him. He took me by stage to a "still," or more elegantly, to a "distillery," in the midst of a densely-built and populated part of the city, where whiskey is manufactured in horrid quantities, yet it would seem as if this were but a secondary branch of the business here carried on. Two THOUSAND COWS are confined in stalls, which are arranged in parallel rows, and in front of each row of cows is a trough, into which the refuse grain from the distillery, called the "still-slops," a villanous fluid, flows directly from the still. It pours in a torrent from the principal reservoir, runs into one trough till it is full, then on into another, and another, till all are filled; and this is the aliment on which these animals feed, to generate the milk that feeds the babes and the babes' mothers in this good city. These cows are

not taken out to be milked, but *there*, in those horridly filthy stalls, from which a stench went forth compared with which the valley of Tophet must have been a garden of aroma, *there*, day and night, they stand and drink this poison for their sustenance; and into this noisome place the milk-cans are carried, and, as the cows are milked, the milk is poured in, and the cans are carried to the door, and placed in the carts that stand ready, and away they are driven directly to the door of the customers!

But the *beauty* of the system is yet to be told. These poison-milk traffickers know very well that, if the customers suspected that the milk was distilled in such filthiness, they would refuse to buy it. And what little trick, my unsuspecting friend, do you suppose they resort to, to lull all suspicion on this point? I'll tell you, and you will never doubt the superior cunning of our city-dealers over your country dulness: they inscribe on their carts some rural title to their establishment, as "The Green Briar

Dairy," "Myrtle Cottage Milk," or something of this sort, and as a good lady sits at her window, and sees this inscription on a neat wagon, with milk cans in it, flying by, she bids Biddy telegraph it when it passes to-morrow, and tell the honest farmer to call there every day!

You must know that we have no great knowledge here in the city of the properties of milk, and therefore we are not able to detect impositions of this sort by inspection of the article itself. Sometime ago a milkman, who drove in daily from a few miles out of the city, was seized with sudden qualms of conscience as to the honesty of levying contributions upon the pump for the purpose of increasing the quantity of his supply, and he therefore resolved, strange, incredible as it may appear, he resolved to carry *pure* milk to market for once in his life. Strong in the faith of this good resolve, he increased the number of his cows, and thus produced an adequate supply for his customers. He had not continued the

distribution of this rare and excellent article more than a few days, before one of his best customers, a lady in —— street, discharged him. When the servant communicated to him her ladyship's order, he begged to be told the reason, and the lady, on being summoned, very frankly informed him, they had observed for a few days past that, when his milk had stood a while, "a dirty yellow scum gathered all over the top of it, and they wouldn't have such stuff in the house!!!" Here was a pretty disclosure. This city housekeeper had never seen such an article as *cream* in her life, and she fancied it to be a filthy excrement, revealing some pernicious ingredient added by the milkman. The dealer was nonplused. Should he resort to the pump, or lose his customers? I never heard the result of his deliberations on this point. But let us return to that milk-factory up town.

The cows are not owned by the distillers. They are boarders only. A man manages to get a little money, sufficient to buy a few

cows, and takes them to this still, where they are stalled and fed for something like two dollars a month: the rent of these stalls and the sale of the feed thus bringing in a most enormous sum to the distillery over and above the profit of the other business, the awful wickedness of which I will not here undertake to portray.

The injurious effects of this milk has been most abundantly shown in years past, and I supposed that our citizens had given up the use of it altogether. But since my visit to this establishment, I have learned that there are in the city and all around it, in Williamsburgh, Brooklyn, and other places, similar establishments, in full blast, so that there is probably more of this poisonous fluid sold for milk in the city of New York this moment, than there ever was before. And this too, notwithstanding the fact that any family here, that wants it, may have milk for tea to-night that was taken from the cows in the heart of Orange county, less than sixteen hours before. Yet there

is no accounting for tastes. And the fact is, if men, heads of families, had it certified to them on the best authority that still-slop milk is a slow but certain poison, they would not care enough about it, to make an effort to secure better, and so they continue to feed their children on that which is known to be decidedly and inevitably injurious.

CHAPTER XVI.

FASHIONABLE CLUB-HOUSES.

You have often read of the club-houses of London, sustained by associations of the most rigid exclusiveness, into which no man can gain admission without the *highest* qualifications. What these qualifications are it would be curious to know. One of the first is plenty of money; the next is a fondness for spending it; and then follows a fondness for those ways and means of spending it which are known to free-livers, and of which such old-fashioned people as you and I know very little. We should be as much out of our element in one of these clubs as a fish out of water, and if we should attempt to speak of the manner in which the members exhaust their time and their

purses, we might only discover our own verdancy.

But I had never seen one of these club-houses, at least a genuine pattern, here in New York, until last winter. Frequently in passing the splendid front of a growing edifice, I had wondered for what purpose it could be intended, and made repeated inquiries with no satisfactory result. The fact that a vast pile was going up in the heart of the city, of which the object was not generally known, only served to excite my curiosity, till I was tempted to drop in under a sign of "No Admittance." I soon learned that this splendid building is put up at the expense of a club who pay a handsome initiation fee, and the capital thus formed is invested in the edifice and furniture. The front presents nothing to the eye to distinguish it from a private edifice of beautiful proportions and elaborate finish, but the interior arrangements and a lateral view will discover that it is designed for the most extensive accommodations of the multitu-

dinous body that have erected the house. It reaches through from street to street, and two thirds of the building seems to be devoted to alleys and chambers for wicket, nine-pins, and such games of ball, &c., as require at once great space and protection.

Penetrating these apartments still further, you are admitted into private chambers where the lovers of play may amuse themselves in more secluded circles, and pursue such methods of destroying time and making or losing money as to them may be more agreeable than mingling in the athletic sports and less-refined contests of the alley or the billiard-room. The *penetralia* will not be discovered until you make a subterranean excursion, and explore the winding recesses of the labyrinth of rooms upon which you have entered. Without a thread or a guide it would be difficult to find your way out, and the safest way to *escape* from such places is to keep away from them altogether.

This establishment, is splendidly furnished, no elegance of embellishment, no luxury

of furniture, no attraction of comfort or display, being spared to render it the admiration of the voluptuous and the envy of all those who have not the means to make a successful push for admission into the club.

The idea seems to have got abroad that this new club-house is designed specially for those who can not comfortably stay at home. It embraces a large number of highly respectable men, from some of the first families of the city, and so many of them are *married* men that it is called in the street, the "ASYLUM FOR DISTRESSED HUSBANDS."

Now I think it is wrong to give the club such a name as this. It intimates that the married gentlemen who belong to it are so situated in their domestic relations that they are under the disagreeable necessity of flying to a club-house for a little comfort. If this imputation is *false*, it is very unkind to circulate the slander; and if it is *true*, it is bad enough to suffer at home, without being twitted of it abroad. I am therefore, from

principle, opposed to the application of this sympathetic title to the house, and I trust that all well-disposed persons will avoid it in future. The object of "most of the club" is "to provide a place where they and their friends can have the benefit of taking athletic exercise, and enjoying judicious recreation and relaxation of both body and mind, without being compelled to mix with uncongenial associates."

Such being the avowed object, it would be supposed that an establishment for "taking exercise" could be conducted under such regulations as should exclude gambling. But not so with this club. The principle on which this is founded is to put "restrictions upon gambling," and by one of the by-laws of the club "no bet shall be made upon any game, in any part of the establishment, exceeding five dollars. The stake at short whist to be not more than half this amount."—"Any member discovered to have infringed this by-law, shall forfeit his right of membership without appeal."

It is very easy to see that this is no better, if not worse, than no rule at all. To say nothing of the case with which it may be evaded by a party who choose to play without the *actual* stakes being known to any but themselves, if it were faithfully adhered to by the members it merely reduces this house into a primary school, where youth may acquire both taste and skill in gambling, which taste and skill may be gratified and exercised in other places with which this city abounds. There is not a passion with which the human heart is fired, that is more resistless and destroying than this of gambling. I have no sermon to preach about it: but I confess a feeling of distress, amounting almost to anguish at the thought that here is a splendid court with every conceivable source of seductive allurement for young men, who are assured before they enter that by the laws of the establishment they can not play for more than *five dollars* upon any one game! Perhaps if they knew that they might *lose more*, even all they have, they

might be deterred from venturing: but the insurance is, "You can't lose but five dollars, come in," and then the habit is formed, the passion is roused, and the result has been written in lines of agony and read with tears of blood. A more fearful chapter than the records of the gaming-table, the history of sinful man does not furnish.

But I am running away from my subject. If you want other illustrations let the celibacy of the Romish priesthood and the Monastic system, spread their "interior life" to your view, and if all history is not a long lie, and all reasoning from facts fallacious, then of a truth is the divine plan for every man to have his own wife, as important as it is pleasant. Worse than the club-house system of living, as more corrupt and corrupting, is the socialistic plan, which the modern Fourierites of our city are seeking to render popular. It is a pestilent and licentious system, undermining the whole structure of society, and offering as an antidote to some acknowledged evils a scheme

that begets a legion of devils for every one it pretends to eject. It is amazing to me that some of our pious people, even Christian ministers, will permit the doctrines of this school to be insidiously but constantly introduced into their houses in their secular newspapers. A society was got up here in New York a few months ago, to make war upon the "light reading" or the "licentious literature" of the day, and they will drive fiercely, and I hope successfully, against Eugene Sue and Bulwer, and such panders to lust as these authors of fiction are, while the hydra-headed monster of socialism is left to work silently and fatally, sucking the heart-blood from the sons and daughters of Christians in the city and the land over.

Leaving the new club-house to which I have called your attention, I could point out to you other establishments, on a smaller scale which have long been in operation in our city, for the same general purpose. It has been supposed that the cities of Europe had a bad pre-eminence over ours in the

facilities they furnish for elegant vice. But I have my doubts whether there is *one* species of iniquity which wicked men lust after, which may not be as readily found in New York as in London. The only good that can result from such remarks as these, must lie in their power to stir the hearts of the friends of virtue to more thorough and untiring efforts to dry up the fountains of vice, and save the young from the paths that lead to death. The gates of hell in New York are gilded : flowers are in the path and music with its voluptuous swell, floats on the ears of the throng that dance down the broad road.

The club, I understand, is composed chiefly of foreigners, though I doubt not that many of our own youth to whom wealth has been left by their hard-working parents, and who have no habits of honest industry themselves, will be found enrolled among its members. Probably the same rules of admission here prevail that govern the London and Paris clubs, and each new candi-

date is voted for or against by those already initiated; white and black balls being used for ballots, and if *one* black ball is deposited when a candidate for membership is proposed, he is not admitted. This makes it extremely difficult to gain a standing in these *recherche* communities, the obstacles being in direct proportion to the undesirableness of the connexion.

Here young men of "fashion," or men at large may find their "board and lodging" at an enormous price it is true, but in that free and easy way that is so vastly agreeable to men who have no wish to be hampered in their business or pleasures with families or regular hours, and so long as the means hold out, the highest style of independent living is to be had in such an establishment. I have said nothing to charge this or similar concerns with profligate vice; but how such vice is to be separated from such an institution, it is impossible to understand. The restraints of *home*, of society, of the private circle; restraints that are silken

cords around the heart, are galling to the necks of those who join a club, and find their pleasure in companionship around the gaming-table or in the alley. The charm that woman sheds in the circle of the intelligent and pure, a charm in which we love to confess that we have long been bound, has no power on the hearts of those who *must* fly to the club-house, in the sports of their own sex to seek the only amusement for which they have any taste. And I need not say that to such men, *woman* is no more than she is to a pagan or a Turk. Instead of being his sister to be blessed with his affection, or his wife to bless him with her love, instead of being the angel of his life to minister to his moral, intellectual, and social desires, that should expand themselves in that which is noble and pure, woman is to him but the slave of his passions and the victim of his lusts.

I make no such charge as this (far from it) against all men who have not "these bonds" of wedded life. But I number not

on my list of friends the man who shuts himself out of the society of virtuous women, and either as a hermit or a "man of the town" can find his pleasure in a world that has no woman for its sun or star. I am even afraid of *literary* men who yield to the seductions of books so far as to refuse companionship with the other sex, and in the retirement of their closets spend their days if not their nights. Since the days of Father Adam down to the present it never was good for man to be alone. And that solitude in Adam's case must be broken too, not by putting another man into the garden to help him in his pruning and planting, but by the company of *woman*, taken, as somebody has said, not from his head to overtop him, nor from his feet to be trampled on, but from under his arm to be protected, and from near his heart to be loved! That's my doctrine; and therefore I dislike the practice which some good men pursue, of cutting themselves off from the usual and important socialities of refined and virtuous life.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE POOR IN NEW YORK.

In former chapters I have made allusions to the poor of the city, but have given no statement of any systematic plans for their relief. When I first came from the country, into this great metropolis, nothing made me so unhappy as the sight of misery, to which I could not shut my eyes. And when I would see a little ragged child crying in the street, his sorrow seemed so hopeless and helpless, that it would hang like a cloud around my heart for *half an hour!* Not a great while, you say, for a man to feel for other's woes; but if we should give more than half an hour to each case of misery we meet in the city, we should have a sorry time of it. Sometimes I have sought to offer comfort by inquiring into the cause of grief, but have seldom been successful in

reaching the source to dry it up. Once I recollect of meeting a little girl, some half dozen years of age, dirty and ragged, crying as if her heart would break, and patting her on the head, I said kindly to her:—

"What's the matter, little girl?"

"Mamma's been a *lickin'* on me," said the child, and very likely she deserved it.

Perhaps there is no city of the same extent in the world where there is less suffering from poverty than in the city of New York.

A friend has recently placed in my hands the results of his investigation into the origin, progress, and efficiency of *thirty-two* societies, the object of which is the relief of the poor and the needy, the sick and afflicted, in the city of New York. Twenty of these associations, in the year 1842, extended gratuitous aid to 65,955 persons; twelve associations do not report the number of persons relieved; and besides these societies, there are hundreds of churches, and many private institutions and individuals,

that extend important aid to multitudes not embraced in the above vast aggregate. I have not a doubt that if the whole truth were known, it would appear that at least 75,000 persons receive alms every year. You will not understand that this number is entirely dependent upon charity. This is true of comparatively few. But is there not something that makes this fireside delightful beyond expression, and the heart grateful to the Giver of all good, while we weep at the thought that ONE FOURTH of all the people who live within the limits of this single city are so *near* to suffering.

It is no matter of surprise to me, that so many are ready to doubt the correctness of this statement, as to the number of the poor in this city. I did doubt it myself when I first reached the sum, and hardly believed the figures. You must, however, bear in mind that the manner in which the register is kept in many of the dispensaries, renders the repetition of the same name in the course of the year unavoidable. Thus, if

a man goes to the city dispensary for medicine and advice, he receives it, and his name is entered on the books. He applies again, the next time he is in want of aid, and again his name is entered; and in the course of the year he may have been a frequent recipient of charity. The same man may also have gone to other institutions, and from them received alms, and there his name is also entered; and in this manner, the aggregate report of these institutions show an exaggerated view of the pauperism of the city. I wish that this explanation were sufficient to account for the wonderful statement, and to satisfy the public mind that it is an error. But I have reason to fear it will be found, on the closest examination, that a number, far exceeding the calculations of the most intelligent, are living in our city at the very next door to want. Understand me, I do not say that these people are supported by alms. Nothing like it. But I mean to say that there are tens of thousands in this rich, young, and

prosperous town, who are living so near to poverty, that if they are sick, they go or send to the hospital, almshouse, dispensary, or some kindred institution, for relief; and if aid were not rendered by the hand of charity, they would probably suffer.

You must count the members of churches relieved by the society to which they belong. There are nearly two hundred churches in this city, to whom the prediction of the Saviour is still fulfilled: "The poor ye have with you always;" and probably few of them afford aid to less than ten, and some of them to far more than that number, in the course of the year.

You will now add to this great number the uncounted multitudes whom private charity aids, not by indiscriminate almsgiving in the street, or at the door, but those *they* find who, like their Master, love to go about doing good; and there are thousands of benevolent men and women who make it a part of their religion to visit the widow and the fatherless, to seek the suffering in

their shrinking retirement, and by delicate inquiry to learn their wants, and pour the sweet oil of tender love upon the aching heart. I have seen men, who perhaps would not have it known, lest it should discover weakness, who take a basket on their arm in the morning, and pry into cellars and garrets where there are signs of poverty, and there have the blessed satisfaction of feeding the hungry. How many thousands in this city are relieved by these messengers of mercy, I know not; but I do know that many will sneer at this statement, and say there are few such angels among the men or women of New York. Not so few as you think for, Mr. Tightfist. Because you gathered your children around you last thanksgiving-day, and over a royal feast thanked God for your loaded table and untold mercies, and never thought of the poor within a stone's throw of your door, who have no table, but rejoice to get the bones that are flung from your kitchen, *therefore* you think that everybody else is as cold-

hearted, and stingy, and merciless, as you! No, Mr. Tightfist, eat your thanksgiving dinner, and eat it all; but there are many in this world who never relish a thanksgiving dinner till they have made half a dozen families happy *for once* at least.

Put all these recipients of charity together, and let us look at the aggregate. I will give you a table of statistics, showing the number of persons relieved in this city in one year:—

New York Dispensary	22,441
Northern Dispensary	10,235
Eastern Dispensary	17,004
Odd-Fellows	18,740
Female Assistance Society for the relief of sick poor	5,000
German Benevolent Society	4,009
New York Hospital	2,116
City Almshouse Department	54,620
Aided by Churches (estimate)	5,000
Relieved by private charity (estimate)	10,000
Society for poor widows and small children	1,449
Other Societies not enumerated (estimate)	5,000
Total	155,614

The "other societies," which I have es-

timated as affording aid to 5,000 persons, embrace such institutions as the "Lunatic," "Orphan," and "Deaf and Dumb" asylums, "Fire-Department Fund," the "New England," "St. Nicholas," "St. David's," "St. Andrew's," "St. George's," and "French Benevolent" societies, "Sailor's," "For the Relief of Aged Colored Persons," "Friendly Sons of St. Patrick," "Temperance Benevolent Associations," and many more from which I have no returns. You will be ready to believe, as I do, that these societies afford assistance to five times five thousand, and therefore, that my estimate is far below the truth. Now there are many of the societies in the table above in which there is no probability that the names of beneficiaries are repeated, while there are others, as in the almshouse out-door relief, and the dispensaries, where it is doubtless true that repetitions are numerous. Let us suppose that one third of 150,000 have been entered but once, we have then 50,000 · suppose that the remainder have been en-

tered each four times, that is, has been relieved by two or more societies, or four times by the same, we will then take a quarter of the 100,000, and add it to the first third, and we have an aggregate of 75,000, being more than one in *five* of the population of the city of New York. If you can believe that this is an over-estimate, very well; and if you, or any one else, will show that there is more repetition of names than I have supposed, still better. Make the number as small as you can; I wish it were less.

By these investigations it was made evident that there are many who need relief to whom it never comes, and that some plan should be set on foot by which judicious and thorough charity should be made to pervade every cellar and garret, every nook and corner of the city; carrying in its arms of mercy the very aid required to the very spot where suffering has a hiding-place. An association of intelligent philanthropists was accordingly formed, and after long delibera-

tion and careful comparison of facts and opinions, they came to the following conclusions:—

1. That of the amount which is annually bestowed on applicants for relief, a large proportion falls into the hands of unworthy objects, and that such charity does more harm than good.

2. That *individuals* either can not, or at least do not generally make the inquiries necessary for judicious action, nor adapt their action to the case with that reference to the principles on *which alone* can any contributions to the use of the suffering take place, without influences so injurious to the individual and readily extended to others, that it has led many to doubt whether refusal without exception to unknown applicants for relief is not the more humane course.

3. That there does exist in this city a large amount of suffering and destitution which in a Christian community ought to meet with relief, if it be possible to devise

any mode which will in any considerable degree avoid the evil usually attendant.

4. That there are good reasons to believe that in associated effort that mode can be found.

These were the conclusions. What was to be done? Mr. Hartley, who had gathered these statistics, visited other cities, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, &c., corresponded with benevolent men and associations in yet other cities, gathered a mass of facts, the result of experience and wisdom, and finally a system was elaborated which appears to be the most efficient, and the least objectionable of any plan which has ever been attempted. It combines the vital principle of charity, that is LOVE, with the degree of practical *judgment*, without which so many charities have been little better than prodigalities, wasting on undeserving objects that which ought to have been oil and wine to suffering worth.

The experiment has had a fair trial, and the result thus far is full of the most sub-

stantial evidence that the thing will work well. I will give as intelligible a view of the system as my limits will allow.

"Its primary object is to discountenance indiscriminate alms-giving, and put an end to street-begging and vagrancy. Secondly, it proposes to visit the poor at their dwellings, carefully to examine their circumstances and extend to them appropriate relief: and through the friendly intercourse of visiters, to inculcate among them habits of frugality, temperance, industry, and self-dependence.

"To effect these important objects, the city from the battery to 40th street, is divided into sixteen districts, which are subdivided into 236 sections. Each district has a responsible committee, and each section an efficient visiter. Connected with the arrangement are a general agent, and a central office, where is kept a register of the persons who receive aid from this and other benevolent associations, and from the city authorities. A pocket directory is furnished

to every member of the association (that is, every contributor to its funds), which shows the name and residence of every visiter, and the section committed to his care ; also printed tickets for referring mendicants to visiters. By this simple arrangement the prompt visitation and relief of the poor are secured, and the public no longer constrained by appeals to their humanity, to bestow alms on unknown applicants, who may be deserving or otherwise. Long experience has shown the practice of indiscriminate almsgiving to be contrary to every sound principle of philanthropy ; yet it has hitherto prevailed to a great extent, for want of an instrumentality which would protect the claims of the deserving, while it put an end to the impositions of the unworthy. Such an instrumentality is furnished by this association. By co-operating therefore with it, every benevolent individual may follow the impulses of his own heart, and contribute to the comfort of his suffering fellow-beings

without the hazard of encouraging imposture or vagrancy."

Now for the practical working of the plan. Every kind-hearted individual wishes to *do something* for the poor. But, fearing that he will give to those who ought not be aided, he will not drop a shilling into every beggar's hat, or give a quarter to every mendicant that rings at his door. But he gives what he pleases, perhaps a dollar, perhaps five, or a hundred, to this society, and he knows that every cent of it will be judiciously and directly applied to the relief of the poor, with as little danger of mistake as attends any human organization. He receives his little book containing the name and residence of each visiter of each district, and when an individual applies to him for aid, he inquires the name and place of abode. Suppose the applicant's name to be Nahum Dixill, staying at 35 Cross street. He opens his directory to Cross street, and finds that the visiter for that street is Mr. E.

P. Woodruff, residing at 549 Pearl street, and taking a card he fills it out as below:—

Mr. E. P. Woodruff, visiter, No. 549 Pearl street, is requested to visit Nahum Dixill, at No. 35 Cross street. (Signed,) A. B——,
Member N. Y. Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor.

The applicant takes this card and proceeds to the visiter, who has engaged to attend to all the calls for that district. He immediately looks into the case, and having learned *what* is wanted, and *how much*, gives the necessary relief, either on the spot, or by an order on the depository, that will be more permanent and efficacious. In this plan I can see nothing defective, if there can be found a corps of visiters with sufficient *benevolence* of soul to perform this service. And it seems, to the honour of human nature be it said, that out of three or four hundred thousand people in this city, there are three hundred men who are willing, for the sake of Christ and the poor, to go about doing good; and I do not

doubt that five hundred or a thousand might be found, who would take upon themselves this duty, finding their reward in the sweet consciousness of causing the afflicted to sing for joy. These visiters not only attend to any calls that may be addressed to them, but they search their own district to ascertain if there is any need of their aid, and thus there is reasonable ground to believe that if the system were adopted, and the citizens generally would become members of the association, substantial relief would be extended to every deserving object of charity within the bounds of the metropolis.

And now, does it not make you love your species more to find them thus labouring to relieve each other's woes? "Man's inhumanity to man" has made us blush a thousand times. Is it not pleasant to know that there are those who love to do good, who deny themselves and take up the cross, and silently, and beyond the reach of human praise, content with the "God bless you" of the poor, penetrate the lurking-

places of wretchedness, and carry comfort to them that mourn.

With such a corps of devoted and faithful visiters traversing the streets, and lanes, and alleys, on errands of mercy, we may well believe that a system is in operation more worthy of adoption, and less liable to objection, than any which has yet been set on foot in this or any other city. I can readily see that these visiters will sometimes be deceived by appearances, and withhold relief from the worthy poor, and bestow it on the undeserving. The abode of dire poverty may sometimes wear the appearance of neatness and comparative comfort; and this very fact may be construed as evidence that the inmates are not absolutely destitute, while squalid filth may move the sympathy of a visiter, and extort alms for objects that rather deserve punishment. Here is occasion for the exercise of sound discretion; and on the fidelity of these self-denying and thankworthy visiters in their

labors of love, depends the usefulness of this great institution.

In the course of their travels they meet with cases, to read of which would make your heart ache. The reverses of fortune in the last eight years present some instances of sorrowful contrast, which those who have always been poor or always rich can not possibly appreciate. What would you think of a family, that ten years ago rolled through Broadway in their carriage, and lived in luxury, now huddling together in a coal-hole; the head of the family there prostrate with sickness, and not a friend to minister to their wants. It would be very easy to make a tale out of this that would move the heart; but what more eloquent than the *thought* that follows this group into their dark hiding-place, and there views them in loneliness, sickness, hunger — what else is wanting to complete the home of wretchedness! May God keep us ever from being *so* poor.

A poor widow was asked on Saturday

evening if she was in need of aid. She said that she had food enough to last until Monday, when she should be utterly destitute. The visiter called on Monday, and found her exhausted for want of food; and what, think you, was the occasion of her suffering? A widow, whose necessity was greater than hers, had called on her, and she had divided her living with her suffering sister! The poor love to help the poor; they know how to feel for them, having been tempted in all points like them.

There are many families in this city that live in underground apartments, where a ray of sunshine never travels; and as you pass, of a pleasant day, you may often see the children, who have been brought up for air, sunning themselves like turtles. The ways and means the poor of the city have for "getting a living," would afford a curious subject of investigation. We sometimes think that the old women who sell apples at the corners of streets must have as hard a time of it as any; but they often make

money by it. A friend of mine told me the other day, that he knew a man who made a thousand dollars in the course of a single year by an apple stall, and if competition is a sign of business being lively, this certainly is a thriving trade. There are *seventy-six* shops in the city, where those who are *hard-up* may take what they have got, or what they can lay their hands on, and exchange it for half or a quarter of its value. A *feeling* man will learn a long chapter of life in New York by just calling, toward night of a cold day, at one of the many pawnbrokers' in Chatham street. He will see a row of stalls, so arranged that each customer can transact his business without being in contact with another. A young woman will steal in with a quick step, and in a low tone of voice will ask what she can be allowed *on that cloak*, which, with trembling fingers, she proceeds to unfold from a bundle she has brought. While this is going on, a colored woman will enter and deposite a spoon, perhaps half a dozen spoons, which she has

been sent with by some one who *will* keep a servant, though she *must* part with her silver; and then comes a man, a strong man, and pledges a flute, or a picture, and takes a few shillings, and marches away in silence and sorrow. There may be no sighs or tears in a pawnbroker's shop, but heavy hearts are there daily.

Many people in New York will not know what I mean by an "old-junk dealer;" but there are forty shops licensed for the business, which is the purchase of all manner of odds and ends of everything under the sun, that anybody wants to sell, and, you would think, nobody wants to buy. In these places you will find old iron, old and odd crockery, old furniture, old everything you can think of; and these are the shops where the thieving boys find a market for their petty spoils, and the poor for what marketable articles may be given them in their levying vagrancies through the streets. Often you may see an old woman pawing over a heap of dirt, thrown from an office into the street,

and picking out every little article that by any possibility can be turned into money. There goes an old man, with a hooked wire, with which he catches up every rag that is in the gutter, which he deposites in a bag on his back; these he carries to the river, and washes *for sale*. Here is a man with a handcart, gathering bones in the alleys; part of them are worth boiling for soup, the rest will find a market. These are a few only of the ways and means of living in the city, and it would be impossible to give a complete picture of the interior life of the metropolis, without revealing scenes from which delicacy shrinks, and which must be for ever unseen by the public eye.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW-YEAR'S.

My readers in the country know that these are great days there as well as here; and they will bear with me when I tell them of the way we celebrate these annual festivals. When I was young, the holydays in the country were well kept, and the only regret we ever felt about those days, was caused by the fact that they came only once a year. They come no oftener now, which fact I mention without the fear of an almanac to disprove the assertion; but they come more rapidly. And now that another season of pleasure and pastime is just at hand, it seems but yesterday that Christmas was here. So the years rush away; one presses on the heel of another, and the great tomb of ages gathers them all.

I was about to speak of the way in which the last holydays passed off in this gay city. And first among the churches. Those of the episcopal and Roman catholic denominations are always opened, that day being regarded by them as the anniversary of the birth of Christ. The churches are dressed with evergreens, from the country forests, wreaths encircling the pillars, huge *crosses* of greens standing on the walls, festoons and stars arranged with taste, if taste it may be called that thus expresses joy in temples built for the spiritual worship of the living God. But I am not finding fault with it. They cut down branches and strewed them in the way, when the Son of man came riding on an ass, and I suppose those who cut down branches and put them up in their churches, intend to honour the advent of the Saviour. And though I can see no fitness in the thing, and to others it may appear foolish, I will respect the customs of those who, in their own way, love to pay

homage to the Lord of glory, the babe of Bethlehem.

The last Christmas was one of the sweetest winter days I ever knew. The various places of amusement were thronged by the *younger* classes, and the streets never seemed to me to show more signs of life and pleasure, though the stores were chiefly closed. As I was walking in Broadway near St. Paul's, the crowds of people hurrying up and down on the walks, the carriages of all classes and names in the streets jostling each other, so that crossing was next to impossible, gave to the scene more than its usual appearance of "confusion worse confounded." I was marking the pleasure which seemed to beam in the smiles of all I met, and of the thousands happy in the return of this season of mirth, when a hearse, followed by six or seven carriages of mourners, moved through the crowded street, reminding me of Mrs. Hemans' words :—

"Thou hast all seasons for thine own, oh Death!"

This was my reflection, as two young men passed me, and one of them said to the other, as they looked at the funeral, "They're going to put somebody to bed with a shovel." My blood chilled at the heartlessness of the remark, and I felt ashamed to think that there was in the likeness of man a thing that could make such cruel mockery of death's doings. I wanted to give the wretch *such* a blow as I gave a man on the wharf a fortnight ago. It was a bitter cold morning, the coldest of last winter, and I was down early at the river, waiting for a steamboat to come in. A well-dressed man, there with others on the same errand, was fretting at the cold and giving vent to his impatience, as if we cared to hear his complaints. At length he muttered out: "I declare, if it wasn't so cold, I'd jump off the dock and done with it." I looked at him and quietly observed: "You will find it *hot* enough *afterward*, sir; perhaps you had better try it." The man was hit; the bystanders smiled at his confusion,

and he slid silently away, so that we heard no more of his grumblings.

But I was speaking of Christmas. It was nearly eleven o'clock in the morning, and I turned down Barclay street to St. Peter's cathedral. Though not the largest, it is one of the most splendid of the Romish churches in this city. A statue of St. Peter holding the keys is over the front door, his big toe ominously projecting beyond the pedestal, and the interior is finished in elegant style. A vast crowd was assembling; it soon became too great for the building, and the worshippers kneeled upon the stone steps on the outside, opened their prayer-books, and proceeded with their devotions, with as much apparent fervor as if they were nearer the altar, and in sight of the great painting of the crucifixion scene, which hangs over it, to touch the sympathies of the devotees. The rich tones of the organ fell on my soul, as I crowded through the mass of men at the door; the brilliant light of multitudes of wax candles burning at the

altar gave a singular appearance to the scene within, and just as I entered, two boys, "clothed in white raiment," ascended the steps within the chancel swinging their censers; the priest then advanced, displaying on his back, which was toward the people, a magnificent cross of his whole length wrought on his surplice in gold; he walked up to each of the branching candlesticks and offered incense, while the silent multitudes looked reverently on, as if God were pleased with the smoking sacrifice. "Perfectly pagan, is it not?" said I to a friend who had strayed in from the same unworthy motive that had brought me there; and we came away mourning over the darkness of idolatry that reigns in the midst of the nineteenth century in the city of New York.

A few minutes afterward I was in a French protestant episcopal church, where a little company, perhaps a hundred, were assembled. The church is a beautiful structure, and was tastefully decorated with evergreens; the pastor read the service in the

French language, and the congregation responded in the same tongue. The effect was pleasing; and I thought of the time when the nations of the earth, each in their own dialect, shall celebrate the praise of Jesus of Nazareth! Glorious time! Is not the dawn now breaking in the East?

During the day, the children of various presbyterian and other churches were assembled in their respective places of worship, addresses were made, and Christmas presents given — an occasion long to be remembered and richly prized by the groups of little ones whom I met, with a cake in one hand and a book in the other, which they had just received as a token of their teacher's affection, and a reward of their own diligence.

You know the customs of society in the city on new-year's day. For many years past, the fashion has been growing, and drawing more classes of society into it from year to year, of devoting the day to making social calls, by the gentlemen, of a few

moments only, on the whole circle of their visiting friends. The ladies *at home* are *sitting up* to receive their company, who are treated to refreshments, and remain just long enough to exchange the compliments of the season, and then hasten on in their pilgrimage of pleasure. Were it not for the temptations of the refreshment table, this practice would be at once innocent and delightful, giving an opportunity for a brief and pleasing recognition of acquaintance, under circumstances that shed a charm over the face of society, soften many of its asperities, consign to forgetfulness slight alienations of the past year, and open the new with a general declaration of friendship. It brings together also for a moment those whom duties during the year have not allowed to meet, so that it often gives rise to the remark, that one finds out who his friends are when the new year comes.

There is but one drawback to this fashion; but one accompaniment that renders it of questionable propriety: and I am free to

say that it often more than balances all that I have said or can say in favour of the city customs of new-year's day. If our wives and daughters, and magistrates, will compel our young men to "look upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup," if the hand of beauty presents the sparkling glass, and the lips of beauty invite the young to drink (temptations, few can resist), then, I say, the evils are more than all that can be urged in its defence, and it ought to be discountenanced and abandoned. The number of those who have laid the foundations of intemperance on this day, eternity alone can reveal. It has been said that the practice of furnishing wines on this occasion has been going out of fashion of late years. I hope it is so. But the practice is still continued in thousands of religious families, and if *there*, of course also in most of those on whom the example of the apostle in eating meat and drinking wine has exerted no power.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CONCLUSION.

And here we leave these sketches of life in the city. It has its lights and shades, but more shade than sunshine, doubtless the reader has thought as he has followed me through these chapters. And the contrast is none the more striking on these pages than it is in the streets. The rich and the poor meet together as they do in the grave. Extremes are always coming in contact. It is but a step from the mansion where wealth gathers its luxuries, to the cellar or garret where hunger gnaws and cold pinches: from the gorgeous temple where worship goes up from purple cushions, to the cell where guilt and wretchedness curse and groan. We have been at the asylum where misery loses its sting, and the heart with anguish torn

finds oil and wine for its wounds, and while the misery pains the heart of sympathy, there is comfort in the thought that it has found friends to minister for its relief.

I have not always lived in the city. Up in the country was my birthplace, and years of childhood and youth in the green hills are remembered with the freshness of yesterday; and never does a day pass over my head, that I do not sigh in secret for the time when I may break away from this wilderness of walls, and find a lodge in another where nature is the builder, and the great world is the temple of his workmanship and praise.

Last winter, in the very dead of it, when the city is chosen as the resort of those who seek pleasure, and the country is forsaken as cheerless and scarcely habitable, I dropped my work, and fled out into the wide world. It was a journey of a day or two to travel a hundred miles into the interior, in search of a friend who called me to spend a few social days at his fireside. But in spite

of the cold and the storm, both of which I had abundantly on the way, I found his house and his heart. It was late at night when I reached the end of my journey, and a long night's rest was the best restorer of wasted strength.

When I arose the next morning, the sun was high in the heavens, the storm was past, and a scene of dazzling magnificence and beauty was spread before my chamber window. The house commands a country landscape of fifteen or twenty miles in every direction, mountain and valley, woods and running streams. For some weeks the whole had been clothed with snow a few inches in depth ; the rain of yesterday freezing on the surface had covered it with a glare of ice, and now, in the clear, cold air of a winter morning, the bright sun poured a flood of glory over the vast field before me. Every twig of every tree was a pendent jewel sparkling in the sunlight; the stubble, which the snow had not covered, glistened like diamonds strewn upon

a limitless mirror of gold; even the fences, clothed in ice, shone like lines of light through the wide expanse, and all nature seemed to leap and dance for joy as in the morning of a new existence. "Great glory this!" said I to my friend, as he startled me from my revelling in the grandeur of his own winter scenery. "Yes," said he, "this is winter in the country."

Toward night I was sitting in the back parlor, looking out upon the wide prospect of hill, and vale, and forest. The sombre clouds obscured the winter sky, and the vast fields of snow lay like an infinite winding sheet over the cold form of lifeless nature. I began to be sad. How dreary, cheerless, desolate, is the world in winter! —when, lo, the farthest hill-top smiled, as if heaven had let down a ray or two of glory to play awhile upon the summit: soon the great sun rolled from behind the clouds, and poured a full tide of golden splendor, dazzling and ravishing, over the world. I did not know that winter could be so beau-

tiful; that death could have so much of life; that a winding-sheet could be so soon converted into white raiment, radiant with celestial brightness; yet was this the glory of nature in the winter! This was grandeur and magnificence, the like of which we have not in the city, and which brings to the admirer of nature pure and elevated joy.

But our thoughts of the country, and the yearnings of the heart we feel for it, are linked with the summer scenery — the mountain and the stream, the flowers and fields all fresh from the hand of God, and redolent of his praise. And the autumn, too, when the hillside forest is covered with splendid robes, of colors varied and lustrous, which no painter's skill may imitate.

There too are *social* joys, the like of which we can not have in such a crowd as this —

"For happiness and true philosophy
Are of the *social*, still and smiling kind.
This is the life which those who fret in guilt,
And guilty cities, never knew; the life
Led by primeval ages, uncorrupt,
When angels dwelt, and God himself, with man."

And as the Latin poet has said, that he who ploughs the sea often wishes that he were a happy landsman, and the man of the fields often thinks he would love to try the seas, so those of us who are pent up in the city sigh after the dear delights of life in the country, and they doubtless who are always *there*, sometimes wish that they were here. But this is human nature. Providence has a place for each of us, and it is well if we have grace to find our place to keep it.

There is work enough for us here in this city. It is a world in itself. There are sinners here as deep in the ruins of the fall as there are in China, and the spirit of the gospel should prompt us to seek them out, and save them. If we can not live in the city for the pleasure of life in its streets, we may live here as those do who are sent with messages of mercy to the heathen. We can live here to do good : to scatter blessings in our own paths, that shall serve instead of the flowers we should find in the fields of a country home.

But there is a city in which it will be glorious to dwell. It hath foundations of precious stones: its streets are gold, its gates are pearl: its builder and maker is God! There shall not enter it anything that defileth or worketh abomination. Its inhabitants are holy: its air is pure: its light is the smile of Him who reigns in it for ever.

"O when, thou city of my God,
Shall I thy courts ascend?"

THE END.

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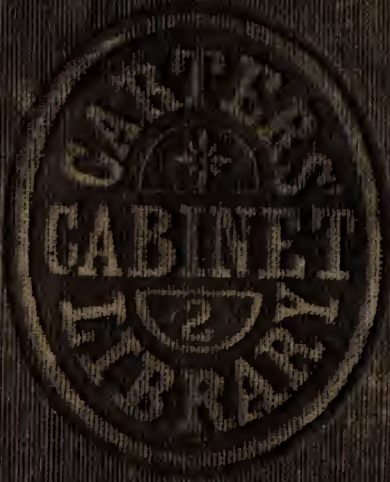
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